



ゼロの使い魔

《ゼロの神話》 ヤマグチノボル

22

【書籍】



ヤマグチノボル
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1972年2月、茨城県生まれ。「カナリア」この長い年歌にのせて『角川スニーカー文庫』でデビュー。代表作『ゼロの使い魔』シリーズのほか、著作多数。2年にわたる闘病生活の末、2013年4月4日死去。本作はヤマグチノボル先生の遺したプロットを元に執筆された続刊となる。

【イラストレーター】

兎塚エイジ

これで『ゼロの使い魔』シリーズは完結となります。ヤマグチ先生と出会えられなかったのが本当に残念ですがなんとか最後を締めくくることができました。丹念みですがこれほどとくに最後の最後まで思い入ります。代筆頂いた方、編集の皆様、ここまで応援して下さいましたファンの皆様、そしてヤマグチノボル先生、本当にありがとうございました！それではラストまでお楽しみ下さい！

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ゼロの使い魔22 ゼロの神話

ハルケニアを滅亡の危機から救うため、ついに「聖地」に到着した才人たち。だが、教皇の隠した「ゲート」の先に隠し出されたのは、才人の故郷——地球の姿だった。ルイズの叫ぶ「生命」を使い、地球を奪還することこそがハルケニアを救う唯一の方法だと語る教皇。「そんなこと、させてたまるかよ！」才人は抵抗しようと剣を取るが、「リヴスラシル」のルーンに命を奪われ、意識を失ってしまう……。才人に預された時間はあとわずか。だが、才人を救うただ一つの方法があると教えられたルイズは……。ルイズと才人の最後の物語が、いまここに始まる——。恋と冒険の異世界ドラマティックラブコメ、堂々の完結！

ヤマグチノボルの本

グリーングリーン 黒ノ魔士タンク・バイ・ブー
【訳者】 兎塚エイジ

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ゼロの使い魔

《ゼロの神話》

ヤマグチノボル

22



突然、才人の身体に異変が起こった。
胸に鋭い痛みが走った……。かと思えば、
全身を強烈な脱力感が包み込む……。

「サイト、ちょっと、
どうしたのよー サイトー！」

「あ……、
く……！」

「サイトさん！」

——第一章 マギ族——



杖を真上に掲げて、
ルイスは「虚無」のルーンを口ずさむ。
エオル・スーヌ・フィル・ヤルンサクサ
オス・スーヌ・ウリュ・ル・ラド

— 第十一章 生命 —



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PROLOGUE

6000 years ago, in that era Halkeginia was known as the “unknown land”. There were no aristocrats or commoners, nor the Kingdoms of Gallia, Romalia, Tristain or similar countries.

Not far from a small village called Nidabelio, located in the hills of the great plains, a young man in a robe said farewell to a girl.

Dragging the robe that was too long, the small statured youth’s appearance seemed gentle but not too eye-catching.

It’s no wonder... since the girl is a real elf.

“You must be careful on the road Sasha. After all, your face is very conspicuous.”

“Please, who do you think I am?”

The elf girl named Sasha answered noncommittally, and showed off the runes glowing on her left hand

“I’m your ‘Gandálfr’.”

“Yes, you’re right.”

The youth smiled. He could really be a worrywart, since the power of the “Gandálfr” resided in her body, even if she were attacked by the fearsome “Varyag”, she could overcome it by herself.

“I’ll go and convince those stubborn-headed elders, then come back right away.”

“Please, the future of our clan depends on you.”

The emotional young man replied. After all, things are getting worse, day by day. However, it goes far beyond the threat of the “Varyag”, and may even lead to a world ending “cataclysm”. In order to avoid destruction, they had to cooperate with the elves, at the very least.

“I’ll also go and try to stop the war faction. We must avoid the worst case from happening.

“Yes, please.”

Sasha nodded, then her vision blurred.

“What’s wrong?”

“I hate you, you big idiot.”

Seeing the youth’s unthinking question, Sasha puffed out her cheeks in dissatisfaction. Then slender arms quickly went around the youth’s neck, and she kissed him.

They kissed for a while... Finally the two slowly separated from each other.

“I love you, Brimir.”

“I love you too, Sasha.”

Brimir Ru Rumiru Yuru Viri Vee Varutori.

Later known as the “Founder”, the youth the received the worship of all the people of Halkeginia, firmly hugged Sasha.

Feeling the warmth of his sweetheart, Brimir thought at the same time.

“God, what am I doing...”

The runes currently engraved on her body weren’t “Gandálfr”, but new runes.

“Lífþrasir.”

Summoned out of love, the Void familiar that bears the cruelest fate.

If negotiations with the elves break down, at that time... do you intend to use this terrible power granted by god...

No, that kind of thing can’t possibly happen... negotiations will definitely succeed.

While tightly holding Sasha, Brimir told himself this.

CHAPTER 1:

THE MAGI

“Saito and the rest are so slow... It’s already been a while since they entered the water.”

“Well, would you like to sacrifice yourself to feed the sharks?”

Malicorne leisurely yawned and answered Guiche’s nervous question.

It was the second day of the third week of the ninth month. The members of the Ondine Knight Corps were waiting for the return of Saito’s group on the deck of the “Ostland”, which was anchored in the sea near the “Dragon’s Nest”.

It had been two days since Saito and Louise had reunited in the free city of Eumenes. Saito, Louise, and Tiffania all accompanied the group with Romalia’s Pope Vittorio, as they went to the resting place of the “magic device” supposedly left behind by the Founder Brimir - The “Holy Land”, on the seabed.

As long as they had gathered the “Four of Four” bearers of the Void, and obtained the “magic device”, they would be

able to stop the destruction of Halkeginia from the “Wind Stones” going out of control.

A steady breeze blew across the sea, and the light of the two moons reflected as shining silver sparkles.

“Saying something like that right now, isn’t that a little too reckless?”

The serious-faced Reynald wrinkled his brow.

“It’s just a joke, but aren’t they a little too slow?”

Malicorne responded.

“No, after all this “magic device” is the legacy of the Founder. It could take a while to start up...In short, we should patiently wait.”

Listening to his students’ conversation, Mr. Colbert stood on the deck while looking dignified.

“The Founder’s ‘magic device’, huh...?”

Having reached a peace agreement with the Elves, and successfully arriving in the “Holy Land”, there was nothing to worry about now... Saying this, there was still an inexplicable feeling of unease in his heart.

After all, Colbert was one of the rare realists in Halkeginia. He really didn’t believe such a beautiful “magic device”

could exist in this world that could prevent the “Wind Stones” from going out of control.

“Please, what’s wrong? You look so serious.”

Kirche, standing at his side, worriedly looked at Colbert’s expression.

“Nothing, just thinking about a little something at the moment...”

“Hey, even if you have no hair, you’re still the #1 man in the world.”

Kirche straightened her back a little and kissed Colbert’s forehead.

“Ms. Zerbst, I’m also not thinking about those things... well.”

Tabitha, with her back to the side of the ship, was sitting at the feet of the two, and reading a book with a “Light” spell floating above her head. But since a moment ago, there had been no sign of her reading the page, and she occasionally looked up uneasily towards the direction of the sea.

“Worried about Saito?”

Kirche mischievously asked.

“ ... ”

Tabitha suddenly blushed and covered her face with her book.

Seeing her taciturn friend acting so cute, Kirche couldn't help but smile.

"Everyone, I've brought some simple snacks."

Siesta informed everyone as she stepped out on the deck. They saw she was carrying a large plate with many sandwiches, and she divided them amongst the members of the Knight Corps of the Water Spirit on the deck. Kirche and Colbert also accepted them gratefully.

"Excuse me, Mr. Colbert."

Siesta asked as she looked at the sea Saito's group had dove in to.

"With this, Halkeginia will be saved. Since there is a peace agreement with the Elves, there won't be any more war in the future."

"Hm... if what his Holiness the Pope said isn't empty words, this is true."

Siesta sighed in relief.

"Oh, that's wonderful, truly... So Ms. Vallière isn't going to have to use that terrible power, right?"

"...Hm."

Colbert nodded with a complicated look on his face.

Louise's newly learned void magic... with destructive power that seemed to far exceed that of the "Explosion" that destroyed the Elven fleet in one attack.

Fortunately, his students won't need to use such a terrible power... although this would relieve the weight on his heart... Really, he felt an unspeakable anxiety.

Ignoring Colbert's anxiety, Guiche and the other members of the Knight Corps of the Water Spirit were leisurely fishing while chatting casually.

"I can't believe that last place Louise, will actually save Halkeginia."

"Our Lord, the vice-captain, as well. When we return to Tristain, let alone becoming Chevaliers, we might even receive a peerage. Things like a commoner receiving a peerage, that's outrageous isn't it."

"A baron... no, a viscount peerage wouldn't be surprising. Saito's achievements truly deserve such a title."

"Please, speaking of returning to school, we're all heroes also."

Guiche looked up at the two moons hanging high in the night sky.

“School...huh, I really miss it. It’s clearly only been a short two weeks since we left Tristain, but it feels like it’s been forever.

After that, he reluctantly whispered, “Ah, I want to meet with Montmorency again soon.”

“This is the long-cherished wish of our ancestors, the ‘Promised Land’ that the ‘Clan of the Magi’ should return to.”

The steady voice of Vittorio, the Pope of Romalia, resounded through the huge hollow on the seabed.

Saito blankly stood in front of the shiny “Door”, and couldn’t control himself for a while.

That was no wonder. After all, the location of the “Promised Land” that Vittorio is pointing to... is undoubtedly Saito’s home, an image of “Earth”.

“How can this be... What the hell is going on...?”

In fact, Saito had been vaguely aware for a long time that the “magic device” with the power to destroy wind stones basically was a folly. However, the scene in front of his eyes was beyond his imagination.

Louise and Tiffania's eyes opened wide, and Henrietta was also speechless. Josette looked at Julio in surprise, and Turuk and Bidashal had an unwavering expression.

After taking a deep breath, Saito trembled as he spoke.

"What is going on exactly? 'Earth'... How can my home be the 'Promised Land'...?"

"What?"

Hearing what Saito said, Louise finally reacted.

"Saito's home? It's there?"

Saito nodded silently. Henrietta covered her mouth in surprise as she listened.

Vittorio, who reacted to Saito's line of sight, spoke with him not moving his eyebrows even once.

"The 'Promised Land' is what it means, Sir Saito. For those of us, the people of Halkeginia, your home, this piece of land is the real 'Holy Land'."

"What...!"

Saito was lost for words. Vittorio's crystal clear eyes, without a trace of any lies, overflowing with devoutness and zeal.

Facing the Pope's line of sight, Saito couldn't help but shrink back.

“Excuse me, your Holiness.”

At that time, Henrietta opened her mouth to speak.

Henrietta fearlessly glared at Vittorio.

“Can your Holiness please explain this in a way we can all understand. You have this obligation, your Holiness.”

“Of course. This is the purpose as for why I led you all here.”

Vittorio looked around at everyone’s expression, as he stood in front of the “Door” with the image of Earth shining out of it.

Then he slowly opened his mouth.

“Well, before I reveal the truth about the ‘Holy Land’, I’d like to ask a question first. Queen Henrietta, in the present Halkeginia, do you know why some people can use magic and other can’t? That is to say, why there are nobles and common people?

“...?”

What’s the point of this question... Henrietta frowned, but then answered.

“The so-called nobles, are people who have inherited the blood of the Founder Brimir.”

“That’s right, you’re correct. The systemic magic that exists in Halkeginia, came with the arrival of the Founder Brimir 6000 years ago.”

Vittorio nodded his head,

“So, where did our great Founder actually come from?”

“Now isn’t the time for a theological quiz your Holiness.”

Henrietta responded bluntly.

But Vittorio still revealed a steady smile,

“No, this isn’t a theological quiz. Queen Henrietta, I’m about to reveal the truth that has vanished from the long history of Halkeginia... that is, the truth from 6000 years ago.

“The truth from 6000 years ago?”

“That’s right. That is, the truth that through the many years the Romalian Vatican has hidden to this day.”

Vittorio’s voice buzzed in the giant cave.

“The Founder Brimir is a god sent from heaven to the world... this is what is written in the scriptures.”

Louise said. This “Truth” is not only circulated in Tristain’s Magic Academy but is also widely circulated in all the countries of Halkeginia.

“Correct, that is indeed what is recorded in the Romalian scriptures... but, that isn’t the truth.”

Speaking to here, Vittorio’s line of sight turned to the “Door”.

At that moment, Saito had an epiphany. All the clues connected in his mind.

The “gun” sent from “Earth” by Brimir... In other words...

“...It can’t be!”

Seeing Saito’s appearance, Louise and Henrietta seemed to follow his epiphany.

“You guessed right. Our ancestors came from the other side of this ‘Door’, that world. In other words, the Founder Brimir, like Sir Saito, was a resident of a different world.”

“What did you say...!”

Louise shouted in surprise. Henrietta and Tiffania looked at each other.

Saito opened his mouth wide in surprise and asked the Pope.

“Meaning that the Founder Brimir and I are the same, that we both are Earthlings?”

“Yes, properly saying, Brimir and his people are a group called ‘Magi’.”

“Magi?”

Louise’s group was completely unfamiliar with this term.

But Saito always felt, a vague familiarity with the term. Where exactly had he heard it...?

“The ‘Magi’ are a minority group that specializes in the use of magic. 6000 years ago, they were led by the Founder Brimir and emigrated to this world. Those ‘Magi’ are the ancestors of our Halkeginians.”

“Our ancestors, are actual people from another world...”

Louise whispered with her dark brown eyes wide open.

“Even though you’re saying this, Your Holiness, it is hardly convincing.”

Depressed, Henrietta responded in bewilderment.

“Of course I know this. If I tell you the truth, I’m sure it’d be laughed at as some ridiculous fairy tale. However, I swear to the Founder and God, this is without a doubt the historical truth that has been passed down through the ‘Founder’s Round Mirror’ since the age of St. Forsythe, the founder of the Romalian Empire.”

Vittorio drew a sign on his chest. This was the action that a sincere believer of Brimir would do when they swore to the Founder and God. For a believer of Brimir, lying after making that sign was the most serious of sins.

At this time, Julio told Saito:

“Saito, you should have already noticed. All of the ‘guns’ of ‘Gandálfr’ sent by the Founder Brimir, came from your world. This is the best evidence, evidence that the Founder was from your world.

Saito listened to Julio’s remark in silence.

The large underwater cave was plunged into silence. The shocking “Truth” that came from the Pope’s mouth, left even Louise and Henrietta speechless.

Among them, Tiffania gingerly opened her mouth.

“Ex-excuse me...”

“What is it, Ms. Westwood?”

“This... why did Brimir come to this world?”

“Of course there was a reason for this.”

Vittorio nodded his head and explained.

“The ‘Magi’ in their old world, were subjected to racial persecution by a group without the power of magic, called

the 'Varyag'."

Hearing the Pope say this, Saito suddenly understood. 'Magi' and 'Varyag'... now he was reminded where he heard these two words.

"Right, didn't I hear this in that rune dream...?"

Before the war between the Kingdom of Gallia, led by King Joseph, and the coalition of Halkeginia broke out... Louise had tried to send Saito back to Earth. At that time, Saito experience a memory, deep from within the "Gandálfr" runes, of 6000 years ago in a dream. Remembering that time, Brimir called himself "Magi", and Saito fought the terrible "Varyag" forces that attacked the village in his dream. And the "Varyag" that fought with Saito, didn't look like a monster or a sub-human... but the same as a human being.

Since the "Varyag" didn't have the power of magic, they feared the "Magi". They persecuted the "Magi" and tried to destroy the entire race. Although the "Varyag" couldn't use magic, they possessed an overwhelming superiority in numbers, and a dreadful weapon built with excellent technology... Even with the power of magic, the clan of the "Magi" was basically out of luck. In order to escape the persecution, the Founder Brimir could only open a "Door" and lead his clan to Halkeginia.

A moment later, Vittorio looked around.

“In other words, the other side of the ‘Door’, that world is our homeland, the place our soul returns to. The descendants of the Founder Brimir and the ‘Magi’, the people of Halkeginia have a legitimate right to return to the ‘Holy Land’.”

“How come...”

Tiffania’s face suddenly went pale. Facing the first revelation of this secret of history, Louise and Henrietta were completely dumbstruck.

“Precisely because the Elven Council has long been aware that your true target wasn’t the ‘Desert’, that is why we could reach a peaceful resolution.”

The Elven Consul Turuk calmly said.

“If you barbarians reclaim the ‘Holy Land’ on the other side of the ‘Demon’s Door’, no further dispute will occur in the future. For the peace of the desert, of course, we’ll do our best to help.”

“Ple-please wait!”

Saito shouted.

“What do you mean return... you don’t mean to send all the inhabitants of Halkeginia to Earth?”

“Of course, we intend for all the people to migrate. The nobles and the commoners, the rich and the poor, everyone has the right to return. Because of the dilution of the pedigree, the people whom we call commoners who are yet to awaken to the power of magic. Because sooner or later, the blood of the Magi which has changed into a draw-back will soon be gone.”

“This... it’s impossible!”

The anxious Saito said in defense.

“How is it impossible?”

“Because there hasn’t been a place on Earth to accommodate all the people of Halkeginia for a long time!”

The number of residents in Halkeginia was unknown. However, it would be simply impossible to immigrate to Earth and establish a new country now.

Then chaos would surely come to the world... Even Saito, who didn’t score well in school, could easily predict this.

But Vittorio’s face didn’t change and continued to say.

“Of course, I know that co-existence is impossible.”

“Then...”

“Therefore, to be accurate, this won’t be called a ‘Return’. Right, if we were to borrow the words of the traitors from

Albion to describe it, we should call it a 'Reconquista'^[1]."

"What did you say!"

"Your Holiness, what exactly is going on!"

Henrietta sharply questioned.

"This means that we have a legitimate right to reclaim our homeland through 'Holy War'. This is the sacred mission given to us by the Founder."

Saying such a terribly earth-shattering thing, Vittorio's expression didn't change.

"Holy War... You want to start fighting 'Earth' with Halkeginian forces?"

"Correct. We've already made proper preparations for this goal."

Seeing Vittorio's clear eyes, Saito couldn't help but be shocked.

"This man really plans to conquer Earth..."

Saito racked his brain, wondering how to convince this man whose mind was filled with madness.

"This is impossible, Halkeginian forces basically have no way of winning. You also know the quality of Earth's

‘Weapons’, right? Not only that ‘Tank’ or ‘Zero Fighter’, there are those that are even more terrible.

Weapons... saying this, Saito suddenly went silent.

What emerged in Saito’s mind was the “Nuclear Submarine” that was sunk on the seafloor of the “Dragon’s Nest.” It would be best not to mention that.

“Correct, in the last several decades, the ‘weapons’ of the ‘Varyag’ have developed to a degree that can’t be believed. Therefore, they must be destroyed before they can acquire even more devastating weapons.”

“What you’re saying is impossible! It’s useless, no matter how many powerful magics you have, the weapons of Earth can easily kill a person before a wizard pulls out a wand.

Saito desperately shouted. In fact, even if Halkeginia’s “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands” were to aggressively attack the Earth now, it would be counterattacked in a few moments and would have tragic results. Once it would come to this, it would be impossible to predict Louise’s and the others lives and safety.

“Yes, the ‘Varyag’ are a terrible enemy. However, God and the Founder Brimir have given us a great power capable of confronting them.”

Hearing Vittorio’s words, Louise suddenly looked up. Seeing this, Vittorio nodded with a steady smile.

“That’s correct, it’s the ‘Final Void’ given to Ms. Vallière.”

“What’s this...!”

Louise opened her mouth in surprise.

“Life.”

Capable to cause devastating destruction, the “Final Void”...
Not to be used to fight the Elves using the “Jewel of Fire”,
but the trump card to conquer Saito’s homeland.

“You actually deceived us, Your Holiness!”

Louise, with her voice trembling and her eyes burning with rage, stared fiercely at Vittorio and Julio.

“Logically speaking, Void Magic is a countermeasure when the Elves used the ‘Jewel of Fire’. Since we reconciled with the Elves, we have no need to use the ‘Void’.”

“Ms. Vallière, I didn’t lie. But I didn’t speak the whole truth, I apologize for that.”

Seeing Vittorio uncaringly bow his head in apology, Louise tightly clenched her lips.

“Although you say this, do you really think I’d do such a thing as destroy Saito’s homeland? If yes, you’ve made a mistake.”

Louise spoke decisively.

“I swore on the La Vallière name, and promised Saito that I would return him to his homeland.”

“Louise...”

Hearing Louise’s courageous declaration, even in the face of such a crisis, Saito felt inexplicably moved.

Ah, Louise, my beloved master...

The resolute Henrietta also confronted the Pope.

“Your Holiness, don’t tell me you still want to sacrifice more of the people of Halkeginia?

But Vittorio calmly shook his head.

“Then I ask you, are you willing to helplessly face destruction?”

“This...”

Henrietta was suddenly dumbfounded. With Halkeginia still facing the major problem at present, the Pope asked himself.

“In the near future, the ‘Wind Stones’ will surely go out of control and engulf all of Halkeginia. Ultimately, for the sake of a barely existent pebble of land, a pointless conflict will begin repeatedly... all of the nobles will probably survive the process, but what about all the other people living on this land?”

“We certainly need to think of a solution for the ‘Wind Stone’ problem. However, to conquer Sir Saito’s homeland, for this reason, is definitely not right.”

“This isn’t a question of right or wrong. Queen Henrietta, on the brink of destruction, we can only try to find ways to survive.”

The only thing in Vittorio’s eyes was the will to persevere.

Saito had faced many powerful enemies before. Like Fouquet, Wardes, Sheffield the Mjöðvitnir, King Joseph, and Aishmail of the “Steel-Blooded Party”... but seeing such eyes, filled with purity, he felt that none of those powerful enemies were as formidable as Vittorio.

He must be stopped... That man was too dangerous.

“Don’t think that’s possible, I definitely won’t let you conquer the Earth!”

The rune on Saito’s left hand lit up as he pulled Derflinger from his back.

“Saito!”

Louise shouted.

Julio immediately pulled the saber from his waist and guarded Vittorio from the front.

“Don’t do anything stupid, Gandálfr.”

“Get out of my way, Julio.”

Saito shouted. Of course, he didn't plan to take the Pope's life, just to grab him temporarily as a hostage, and try to force him to give up on that plan... thinking this, while Saito was preparing to knock Julio, who was facing him.

“Ah...uh...!”

Suddenly something odd overcame Saito's body.

A sharp pain escaped his chest... closely followed by the feeling of his whole body collapsing.

Saito knelt to the ground as Derflinger fell from his right hand, then his head fell to the floor.

“Saito, please, what's wrong! Saito!”

“Saito!”

Louise and Tiffania hastily supported Saito's body from both sides.

Feeling Saito, all the blood in his body gradually became as cold as ice.

“Your Holiness, what have you done to Saito!”

Louise glared at Vittorio, as she held Saito's arm.

“I haven't done a thing.”

Vittorio showed a look of pity as he looked at Saito.

“Sir Saito is the ‘Final Familiar’, and bears the greatest role in the mission to recapture the ‘Holy Land’. If I were to open the ‘Door’ to the Holy Land, it’s normal for there to be a reaction.”

Hearing this, Louise was shocked as she looked at Saito’s chest. She saw the strange ‘Lífþrasir’ runes glowing under his jacket.

“How come... Tiffa and I have obviously not chanted a void spell... Saito, please, pull yourself together, Saito!”

Loudly hearing Louise’s crying voice, Saito’s field of vision faded. A terrible sensation smothered him, it was as if some unseen hand grabbed his heart, and was gradually extracting all the life from him.

“Louise...Loui...se...!”

As Saito’s consciousness fell into the darkness, Louise wailed as she broke down in tears.

NOTES

1. [↑](#) A reconquest.

CHAPTER 2:

THE DREAM OF THE RUNES

“...ito...Saito...!”

The voice calling Saito gradually faded away, and his vision suddenly went dark.

When Saito opened his eyes... they were greeted with a wide desert.

“...Well...um...uh?”

Saito couldn't help but rub his eyes and mutter blankly.

“Huh? What happened? Where is this?”

Wasn't I with Louise and the others at the “Holy Land” on the seabed? After opening the “Door”, the Pope declared that the “Magi” so and so's had such a crazy goal like wanting to invade the “Earth”...

“After that, how did I end up in this mysterious place...?”

Speaking of which, where did Louise and the others go?

Tiffania, Henrietta, the Pope, and Julio?

Saito shook his head, sat up, and looked around the area.

At the time, he was in the middle of the desert with the sun overhead. Looking behind him, off in the distance behind a wavering haze, was an incomparably huge mountain.

At the foot of the mountain was a snow-white city surrounded by a majestic wall.

But he had never seen such a city before. Neither the cities of Halkeginia nor the cities of the Elven nation he was brought to after he was kidnapped before.

Things were making less and less sense.

“Where exactly is this place?”

Saito sat down in the same place and crossed his arms in front of his chest as he contemplated.

Did Saito get thrown in the desert when he blacked out?

No, how was that possible... Saito immediately denied this possibility. After all, even all those guys in Romalia would have a problem if he were to die here. Wouldn't they need the familiar Saito if they wanted Louise to use “Void”...?

“Right, how's the rune on my chest?”

Thinking this, Saito pulled out the shirt under his jacket and peered at his chest.

The “Lífþrasir” runes were no longer glowing. That terrible empty feeling, like losing all his vitality, was now completely gone.

“Shouldn’t I be dead?”

Since this is Halkeginia, is this the afterlife?

Please, how could I die now?

Saito shook his head, his complexion pale. The Pope was trying to use the power of Louise’s “Void” to invade the “Earth”, if he didn’t hurry back, things could become a huge mess...

But how could he get back...?

Considering that, Saito tried to knock himself on the head with the hilt of Derflinger. If this was a dream, then that would wake him up.

With the dull sound of a “Knock”, stars immediately appeared in his vision.

“...Damn, how could it be this painful in a dream?”

Saito couldn’t help but curse as he touched his temple.

In this case, at this point, Derflinger would be complaining, “Why are you so stupid, partner”. But not a word had come from the mouth of Saito’s noisy friend.

Saying that you probably should open your mouth, thought Saito. Since Saito had collapsed in the city of Eumenes, Derflinger had refused to say anything.

“Hey, what’s going on, really...?”

Saito sighed, as he meditated with his arms across his chest.

Then he remembered all of a sudden.

“Wait a minute, I’ve run into this kind of situation before...”

Finally becoming aware of the current situation, he felt an inexplicable sense of *déjà vu*.

I remember having such a strange dream a long time ago.

Yes... That was the Water Capital “Aquileia” when I was hypnotized by Louise and fell into a deep sleep...

At that time, Saito glimpsed a fragment of a memory from 6000 years ago in his familiar rune while he was asleep.

“...In that case, am I seeing another dream of 6000 years ago?”

Therefore, Saito felt confident that this was definitely the case.

The dream Saito saw before was a memory sleeping in the runes of the “Gandálfr”. Saying that, was the current dream

a memory sleeping in the “Lífþrasir” runes?

An evil chill couldn't help but run up his spine.

What kind of dream was this exactly...?

After sitting in the same spot with his heart full of worry, Saito saw an individual shadow from the other side of a huge sand dune gradually come to his side.

Who was it exactly? While being cautious, Saito grabbed Derflinger's hilt at the same time.

As the bean-sized figure gradually approached, its outline became clearer and clearer.

The person was a petite man, wearing a robe so long that it dragged on the ground.

He had a head of bright blonde hair, as well as a serious, if unremarkable, appearance.

This person was one that Saito remembered.

“Mr. Brimir!”

Saito shouted, The robed man immediately discovered Saito and slowly walked to him.

Sure enough, he was in the rune's dream from before, where he met the Founder Brimir.

Saito was confident that what he was seeing now was the rune's memories.

Shortly, seeing the appearance of Brimir, Saito couldn't help but gasp.

Brimir had become a bit older, his cheeks were thin, and he looked like a different person from when Saito saw him before.

Brimir carefully looked at Saito's face, then revealed a puzzled expression.

"...Excuse me, who are you? Where have I seen you before?"

"You don't remember? It's me, Hiraga Saito.", Saito answered. After all, how long ago had it been? Not to mention, was the Brimir in front of his eyes really the same Brimir that Saito had seen before?

"Um, this really gives me a sensation of déjà vu, but where have I seen you before?"

At that moment, Saito had an epiphany. Right, I just need to let him see this...

Then Saito gripped Derflinger and showed him the glowing runes on his left hand.

When Brimir saw, his eyes went huge and he shouted.

“‘Gandálfr’! Right, I remember... You’re the youth from that time!”

“Yes, thanks a lot for before.”

Saito bowed his head in greeting, and Brimir smiled slightly.

“Oh, I’m sorry. That was when I was living the life of a continuous wanderer and was many years ago. Well, it’s truly incredible that you haven’t gotten any older than you were back then.

“I am a person from 6000 years in the future.”

“Ah, that’s right.”

Brimir answered with a look of surprise on his face.

“So what are you doing here? Where is your master?”

I, ah, uh, lost my way in the desert... What are you doing here, Mr. Brimir? Everybody in the village, and Sasha?

Hearing Saito’s question, Brimir’s face stiffened, then he answered.

“She should be coming here momentarily.”

Then, Saito followed Brimir to a sparsely wooded area, like a small oasis. A tent frame and a damaged well were both abandoned nearby, as well as the skeleton of a large

animal, which he didn't know if it was from a horse or camel. It looked like an abandoned village.

Brimir pointed at the mountain in the opposite direction and said.

"Heading north from here is a land with people living in it. It's best to flee from here since this area will soon sink to the bottom of the sea.

"Sink into the sea? What's this about?"

Saito said in surprise.

"Do you know? Your ancestors may not know yet, but this world is facing a terrible, world-ending crisis."

"What?"

Hearing this, Saito's mouth fell open.

What did he mean by facing destruction?

Isn't the world facing destruction ours, 6000 years in the future?

Seeing Saito's uncomprehending face, Brimir explained in detail.

"Have you heard of the stuff called 'Spirit Stones'?"

"Is it like 'Wind Stones' or a 'Jewel of Fire'?"

Hearing Saito's answer, Brimir exclaimed.

"It is indeed, 'Gandálfr', you know a lot. Did you learn it from your master?"

"Uh, something like that."

Saito responded warmly.

"That makes this easy to explain. In other words, 'Spirit Stones' are the crystallization of the power of the spirits of this world. The vast majority of them are buried deep underground and no one has ever seen them."

This sentence got Saito thinking. In the time that Brimir was alive, they probably didn't have the technology to mine 'Wind Stone' yet.

Brimir looked down at the ground at his feet.

"The power of the 'Spirit Stone' sleeping in the ground will erupt across the world."

"What did you say!"

Saito couldn't help but shout.

Are you saying that the "Wind Stone" already went out of control before in Halkeginia 6000 years ago...?

"If this happens, the earth will be turned upside down and humanity will lose the land they can survive on," Brimir said

bleakly.

“Even after this event that took place 6000 years ago, the same tragedy will happen in Halkeginia...”

Luctiana said the “Great Disaster” that killed half the Elves, could it really be that the “Wind Stones” went out of control.

“But I will absolutely not let this happen, absolutely not.”

Brimir, with a look of relief, stood up.

Looking closely at the city stretched across the foot of the mountain.

“That’s...?”

“It’s the capital of the Elves. A great city protected by the ‘Great Will’.”

“That’s the capital of the Elves...”

The towering snow-white walls were built around the mountain and were really similar to earth-style construction. It was not the same as Nephthys’ “Adyl”.

After 6000 years, changes in architectural styles were inevitable, thought Saito. However, to be able to build such an incredible city 6000 years ago, the Elves sure were quite amazing.

Saito watched Brimir face the Elven city and extend his hands.

“What are you planning on doing?”

“Doing what I need to do in order for my tribe to survive. I only came here for that purpose.”

Brimir said with a stiff face.

“In order to survive...”

Mouthing that sentence again... at that moment, Saito was suddenly alarmed.

He wondered why Brimir came here, and what he was going to do next.

In order to survive, what do you need to do... isn't that the same as what happened in Halkeginia 6000 years later?

Each fighting for land to live on, as if repeating the performance of history 6000 years ago...

The legend of the “Great Disaster” that destroyed half of the Elves. And as Derflinger had said, Sasha, as Gandálfr had killed Brimir... What did this sentence really represent?

All the clues came together in Saito's mind.

No, it can't be...!

It was only now that he discovered the truth about the huge mountain range towering on the other side of the desert.

Remembering what Mother Sea said at the “Dragon’s Nest”, the place where the weapons that had drifted from Earth arrived at, was on dry land thousands of years ago. Several thousand years ago, “Something” changed the surrounding landscape, causing the “Holy Land” to sink to the bottom of the sea.

As for that “Something”, it was...

“Mr. Brimir, don’t tell me you’re planning to destroy that Elven city!”

“That’s right. For my tribe that lacks power, this is the only way to survive.”

Brimir answered in a hoarse voice.

“Please don’t do this. If you really do this... the war will last for thousands of years.”

“I won’t. Today, all Elves will disappear from the face of the earth.”

“Don’t joke around... Isn’t Ms. Sasha an Elf!”

Hearing Saito mention Sasha’s name, a pained expression appeared for a moment on Brimir’s face, and he weakly shook his head.

“It’s already too late, this is the only way.”

“Why...?”

Brimir, holding up his hands, began chanting the runes of the “Void”.

At that moment, acute pain flowed from Saito’s chest.

Saito couldn’t help but moan and kneel on the ground.

“...shit...damn...”

A dazzling light appeared over Brimir’s head as he chanted the runes.

That light... was very similar to Louise’s “Explosion”, thought Saito.

But it was not “Explosion”... it was a much, much more scary spell.

Perhaps it was the instincts of a Void familiar, that let Saito sense this.

If such a terrible power were to be released, it could easily destroy a city.

Brimir’s voice sounded particularly clear, as his consciousness gradually faded.

“Because there’s no way for us to understand each other.”

CHAPTER 3:

LOUISE'S DETERMINATION

"Saito... Please, wake up soon, Saito."

Louise, with tears on her face, held Saito's hand as he lay on a bed.

This was Louise and Saito's room on the "Ostland".

After Saito had fainted, Louise and Tiffania immediately supported his limp body as they floated in the sea, surrounded by the magical bubble that Bidashal had created.

Colbert and the others on the deck were shocked to see the weakened Saito. Siesta immediately grabbed the sheet on the stretcher, and everyone sent them to their room to rest.

After that, Louise was at Saito's side tending him constantly. It had already been 30 minutes since Saito had fainted, but there was still no sign of him recovering his consciousness.

Obviously, it wasn't just any fatigue or illness. After Saito had fainted, Henrietta immediately cast "Cure", but it had no effect.

Louise could only hold Saito's hand, and wait at his side. The light of the runes on his chest had already vanished, but Saito's hand still felt as cold as death.

"Why did this happen...?"

Saito said that the power of the "Lífþrasir" was the "Power Supply" for those that bore the Void.

When the contracted master would cast Void magic, he would be responsible for supplying spiritual power... Therefore, Louise always thought that it would be alright as long as she didn't cast "Void" magic. But at that time, Louise and Tiffania didn't use any Void magic...

The Pope said that he only ended up like this because he was near the "Door"... but exactly how true that statement was, was debatable in its suspiciousness.

Within Lífþrasir, the final familiar, surely there still was a secret she didn't know about...

At that moment, Saito's hand that Louise was holding twitched slightly.

"Saito!"

Louise quickly looked at Saito's face.

With the sound of a scream, Saito leapt up from the bed.

At that moment, it seemed like his head had hit something. That something he hit made a sound like when a cat is squeezed, and he immediately looked back.

“He, huh...?”

Having recovered, Saito looked around. He discovered it wasn't the desert from 6000 years ago... it was the inside of his familiar cabin on the “Ostland”.

“Mr. Brimir? What happened after I was swallowed by that light?”

At the end of Saito's confusion, the sound of an angry growl came from under the bed.

“You... You... Really, what are you doing!?”

Crawling out from under the bed, Louise was pressing her forehead and glaring at Saito with tears in her eyes.

“Lo-Louise... I'm sorry!”

“After seeing you suddenly faint, you didn't wake up, and the-then you...”

Louise, trembling with anger, raised her fist, but that could've been an emotional burst from having to be patient so long. Her dark brown eyes suddenly filled with tears, and she burst out crying.

“Idiot, Idiot, Idiot, Idiot! Do you know how worried I was about you!?”

Waving her fist, she hit Saito’s chest.

“Louise, you...”

Don’t tell me that you’ve been taking care of me ever since I fainted... Saito was deeply touched. With a “This kind of master is entirely too cute”, Saito couldn’t help but tightly hold Louise.

“Saito...”

After Louise quickly recovered her equilibrium, she relaxed and cuddled on Saito’s chest.

Pink-blond hair tickled Saito’s chin. The petite and thin Louise, fit perfectly in Saito’s embrace.

Once Louise calmed down, Saito opened his mouth.

“...Say, how long was I out for?”

Louise rubbed her tearful eyes, and couldn’t help but look away.

“About 30 minutes... Even though the runes on your chest disappeared, you were constantly talking in your sleep.”

“Oh, it turned out like this.”, Saito spoke, his voice a little disappointed.

Seeing Louise's panicked appearance, he thought that he'd been out for a longer period of time.

"Hey, what do you mean by 'Oh'...? Even though people were really worried about you."

"I'm sorry for making you worry."

After apologizing and scratching his head, Saito looked up at the ceiling and then opened his mouth.

"... I, had a dream."

"It wouldn't be a scary dream?"

"Uh, it is..."



After nodding his head, Saito wiped the cold sweat from his forehead.

“The Founder Brimir appeared in my dream.”

As soon as she heard Saito’s words, Louise suddenly realized that his expression was serious.

“Don’t tell me it’s the same as the dream that you had in Romalia?”

But Saito shook his head.

“No... It was in a later period of time compared to the last one.”

“What did you dream about?”

Louise sat next to Saito.

Then Saito told Louise the content of his dream. 6000 years ago, the “Wind Stones” also went out of control. Before the “Holy Land” sank to the bottom of the sea, there was once an Elven city, and the Founder Brimir had cast “Void” magic on that Elven city...

After hearing Saito’s narration, a sad faced Louise muttered.

“So, the Founder once cast the ‘Void’ in order to obtain the land of the Elves.”

“Yes, he also claimed that this was a last resort for the survival of his people.”

“This is the true face of the “Great Disaster” in Elven legend.”

“Right...”

At this time, Saito luckily remember what Derflinger had said.

“Sasha, who was Gandálfr, killed Brimir.”

Don't tell me that Sasha of the Elven tribe killed Brimir for revenge. A familiar killing her own master... what exactly was her state of mind then?

Just like him killing Louise, he couldn't even think about that sort of thing.

“I tried to persuade Mr. Brimir, but in the end it still failed.”

Saito said with a voice full of regret.

“This is obvious. The dream you see is a memory that is engraved in the runes, and is history that has already taken place. Of course there's no way to change it.

“It is... that is true.”

With a sigh, Saito was dejected.

At this moment, Louise felt like something was wrong, and had a moment of doubt.

“But, something is strange, the numbers don’t add up.”

“What’s strange?”

“Didn’t Julio say before, that “Wind Stones” will only go out of control every several tens of thousands of years. It’s clearly only been 6000 years since the time of Brimir, so why are they starting to go out of control again?”

“Who knows?”

“Who knows... what.”

Louise had a disappointed look on her face.

“No, we really don’t know. If I still have an opportunity to meet with Mr. Brimir, I’ll try to ask for clarification next time.”

“When is that next time?”

“Who knows?”

Louise sighed noncommittally to Saito’s answer.

In short, Saito’s dream wasn’t truly a dream, that was certain. So there may be a chance to see the same dream...

“But, why do the familiar runes let Saito have this sort of dream?”

Louise felt skeptical.

A silent atmosphere permeated for a bit... and then Saito remembered an important matter.

“...Right, what happened afterwards?”

When asked, Louise briefly nodded her head,

“Well, the ‘Door’ to the Holy Land quickly shut. As for His Holiness, the Pope, it seems that he intends to accumulate spiritual power and open a larger ‘Door’ for the passage of the Army. And after joining forces with the main body of the ‘Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands’, he can immediately begin the invasion of your world.”

“The Pope really wants to start a war with the ‘Earth’, the world I used to live in.”

A deep sense of powerlessness hit Saito. The recovery of the “Holy Land” is certainly the Pope’s wish. No matter how Saito persuades him, it’s impossible for the Pope to give up on that idea...

“Rest assured, I won’t let this happen, absolutely not.”

But Louise spoke with complete conviction.

“Louise...”

“I’m truly a noble of Tristain, as well as a devout believer in Brimir. But it is absolutely wrong to invade Saito’s world in order to save Halkeginia. I would rather follow my own idea than the will of God and the Founder.”

Saying this, Saito was very impressed by Louise’s pink-blond hair. It’s amazing... my master is so cool, Saito thought. At the same time, it felt like Louise had changed a lot since they first met.

The former Louise valued her glory and reputation as a noble over everything else. Convinced that the most important things were loyalty to Tristain’s royal family, and respecting the Founder’s teachings. If she was like she was before, she would never say what she just did, even if the heavens fell. Saito was touched by Louise’s intentions but he had one thing that he was worried about.

Even if Louise resisted resolutely, the Pope would definitely use every means available to force Louise to launch the “Final Void”. For example, using the secret medicine of the Elves it would be easy to manipulate Louise’s mind...

Saito voiced his worries, and after Louise thought for a bit,

“I think, you shouldn’t worry.”

“Why?”

“Because ‘Void’ magic and Systematic magic aren’t the same, the trembling of the heart is the source of its power. If

you use drugs and the like to destroy the mind, then there's no way to cast 'Void' magic."

"Yeah... Then those Romalian guys wouldn't dare screw around."

This allowed Saito to relax temporarily. Since both the Pope and Louise were Void bearers, he must have understood this.

"Moreover, if the Pope was going to resort to this method..."

Louise's expression stiffened, like she had a realization,

"If I were to destroy Saito's homeland, I'd rather kill myself on the spot."

"Wh-what are you saying... don't say such stupid things!

Saito quickly urged, but Louise shook her head.

With a serious expression, she adamantly said, "I'm serious".

Louise wasn't lying, Saito understood. Before, in Albion, Louise mistakenly thought that Saito, who charged into an army 70.000 men strong, was dead, and she truly planned to commit suicide. At the time, thanks to the statue Guiche made, she reluctantly gave up on the idea.

"That won't work. If you really do something stupid, then I'll also want to die."

“No, no, how could this be? If you die, it would be pointless.”

“Then don’t let the word death pass your lips, idiot.”

“I-I’m not stupid...”

Louise sulked, pouting her lips.

“Didn’t we agree before? If we die, we die together.”

“Mm, yes...”

Saito stared with a serious expression, and Louise nodded as her face blushed bright red.

The two sat on the bed gazing at each other. Not long after, their lips met.

“Mm...”

Holding each other’s backs through the strength of their fingers, they pressed their lips together.

Louise, who closed her eyes, meekly cuddled in Saito’s embrace. With those sincere words that Saito unintentionally said just a bit ago, just then succeeded in making Louise’s heart skip a beat.

N-no, this guy, saying something like “I’ll die too”...? Isn’t that cool? Like this, doesn’t he like me too much, no?

During this moment of excitement, she was gently pushed down on the bed by Saito.

“No, it’s not okay... N-not right now.”

Louise protested in a weak voice.

Of course, she was not serious about resisting... but it still affected Louise’s self-esteem. If she were to let Saito think that she was too easy of a woman, that could affect the reputation of the three daughters of the La Vallière family.

“This is the right time, you know.”

“Eh?”

Reaching for Louise’s chin, Saito said.

“Just because it’s a time like this, I really want to hold Louise close.”

“Ah...”

Hearing Saito whisper with such an earnest face, she suddenly felt like her body melted.

What does she care about her self-respect as a noble, those things are all completely unimportant.

With a “Wh-what, this guy’s really cunning, yet...”, Louise’s lips grew sour. With him saying those words, won’t I become an easy woman?

Louise, who easily surrendered, excitedly closed her eyes, and brought her lips to Saito's.

Until now, Saito finally understood the words he just said and how they touched Louise's heart.

"Ple-please, my master is just too cute..."

However, there was no lie in what he just said, they were Saito's honest words.

In order to protect Louise, he wouldn't even hesitate to die.

If Louise died, he would also die.

Her spinning, reddish-brown eyes. Her long eyelashes decorating her eyelids. Her action of lightly biting her upper lip. Her cute flat chest. Who through her obstinacy, her anger, being more straightforward than anybody else, was a proud woman... Saito was willing to spare no effort to protect all of Louise.

"I love you, Louise."

"Really?"

"Of course."

"Say it one more time."

"I love you, Louise, I love you the most."

Gently caressing Louise's beautiful pink hair, Saito continued to whisper in her ear.

She wanted to feel my most important sweetheart's body temperature like that, forever.

The person I love the most was by her side... Just like that, the power within her surged forth.

"The Romalian Pope was ambitious, and was trying to regain the "Holy Land"... But if he was together with Louise, even in the present situation, there was an opportunity to overcome it." Saito had that sort of feeling.

The two kept kissing on the bed.

Finally, after a particularly long kiss, Louise said.

"You know, Saito..."

"Mm?"

"I'll go to the Pope again, and try to convince His Holiness."

Saito held Louise's hand, and shook his head.

"You can't, it's too dangerous."

"Relax. For the Pope, I'm the most important piece. At least he should listen to what I say.

"But..."

Speaking of that, Saito suddenly went silent. The things that he just had seen in his dream... the tragedy that happened 6000 years ago, it would probably be good to tell the Pope.

The Founder Brimir destroyed an Elven city, which became the fuse for a war with the Elves that spanned several thousands of years. Perhaps that dream was a warning to remind future generations to not repeat the same tragedy.

“...I know. Then I’ll also go with you.”

“No, you need to rest for a while.”

Louise reached out a hand and pressed on Saito, who was trying to get up out of bed.

“Leave it to me.”

—

Then, at that same moment, Henrietta, the Queen of Tristain confronted the Pope in a resolute manner, on the Romalian Union Empire’s flagship, in an office on the Summoning Warship, named “St. Mark”, which was made for the Pope’s personal use.

“Your Holiness, please reconsider. It wasn’t easy to reach a peace agreement with the Elves, so do you want to force the people of Halkeginia to face an even more massive war?

“To participate in the “Holy War” is the sacred obligation given by the Founder Brimir to everyone who lives in Halkeginia, and all the followers of Romalia. If this can’t be achieved, it’s a betrayal of the Founder.”

Vittorio’s expression didn’t change and he shook his head quietly.

“It’s enough, as long as you have zealous believers who willingly sacrifice their lives for the Founder.”

Henrietta glared at Vittorio, bringing out all of her sarcasm.

Even though this was an informal occasion, she was in the presence of the Pope of Romalia. If those words were condemned by the religious office, even if she was the Queen of Tristain, she could still be brought up on the charges of heresy.

But Vittorio didn’t feel displeased, He answered bluntly.

“Fanaticism is fine, otherwise it’s impossible to save Halkeginia. The ‘Uprising’ of the land caused by the ‘Wind Stones’ is an unavoidable and real problem, or would you rather save the neighbors of a different world that you’ve never met, and do nothing to save the people of Halkeginia? It seems that the spirit of fraternity is truly great. However, this is a privilege that only the living can display. Our very existence is threatened, but we also have to consider the

fate of other people. If this isn't called fanaticism, then what is fanaticism?"

Henrietta bit her lip.

"Then I would ask a question. How can Your Holiness guarantee the 'Holy War' you speak of won't cause an even great disaster compared to the 'Uprising' or Halkeginia? Didn't Saito-dono also say that the world on the other side had terrible 'Weapons'?"

"Indeed, the power of the 'Varyag' is very strong. I admit this, but we also have a trump card. With the awakening of Ms. Vallière 'Final Void', it's enough to completely eliminate the 'Varyag'."

"You intend to let Louise do the dirty work?"

Henrietta's question was very sharp.

"I don't deny it. But I hope you can understand that this is the only way to save Halkeginia. In fact, I also hoped that there really was a convenient 'Magic Device', but that kind of thing doesn't exist. Among set choices, we can only choose to be destroyed, or destroy others. That's it."

"But..."

"Henrietta-dono, please take a look at this."

Vittorio placed a small box on his desk, and passed it over to Henrietta, who desperately wanted to refuse.

“What is this?”

This made Henrietta show an expression of surprise. The thing in the box was really incompatible with the image of Vittorio as an honorable person... it was a pistol.

But the shape was very strange. The guns that were given to Agnes and the other members of the Musketeer Corps were the latest styles created by Tristain's workshops, but they weren't the same as this pistol. The material was unmistakably metal, but it was not like pure iron...

“This was found in the ‘Holy Land’, a weapon from the world on the other side. This technology is far more sophisticated than the guns we build.”

At that time, Henrietta remembered Saito, and all the mysterious weapons he had used. Including the “Dragon's Raiment” and the “Metal Monster”, which had led Tristain to victory in several wars.....

“So, what is this about?”

Vittorio nodded seriously,

“In the past, the ‘Varyag’ used the ‘Door’ naturally produced by this world to invade our Halkeginia. There are no signs yet, but one day they will analyze the secret of the ‘Void’

with their terrible technological power and once again open a 'Door' to this world. As a result, not only the nations of Halkeginia, but not even the Elves can oppose them. This absolutely must be avoided... before they acquire the power of the 'Void', we should strike first and destroy them, and this is the mission that God and the Founder entrusted to us."

"This sort of thing..."

"It's impossible. Can you assert that? Gamble with people's lives?"

"..."

Facing the Pope's questions, Henrietta remained quiet.

"Can't you negotiate with the world on the other side? We can even reconcile with the Elves who bear a major grudge against us. That's right. Wouldn't it be fine to let Saito-dono, who came from that world, serve as an ambassador. He can definitely accomplish this task for us."

Vittorio shook his head.

"What if the other party doesn't accept the negotiations? Once the other party knows of our existence, we have no chance of winning. The people of Halkeginia will be slaughtered, and completely trampled on. This will lead to us losing the valuable opportunity to strike first, and even if

the we reach a temporary peace, it doesn't mean that it can last forever.

"But, Your Holiness..."

Even so, Henrietta still tried to refute him. In order to avoid a war that would sacrifice many people no matter what. However, seeing Vittorio's perfectly clear eyes, his madness, and his faith, which was of paper-thin difference to it, the idea of trying to persuade him, tragically broke.

"No one can persuade him to change his mind..."

"The Kingdom of Tristain will withdraw troops from this 'Holy War'."

Henrietta decisively spoke.

"I have no way to agree to this. Now is the time when the countries of Halkeginia must unite, otherwise the chance to win the war may be lost."

"What do you mean by that you can't agree?"

This statement made Henrietta stare at Vittorio.

"Tristain isn't your country, Your Holiness."

"You're right. But, in the current 'Holy War', if civil strife breaks out in Halkeginia, your motherland will become the enemy of God."

There was no doubt that this was a naked threat.

Tristain was a small country, and the continuous campaigns had already led to the fatigue of its forces. If it were to meet the forces of Romalia, which had hold of the great Kingdom of Gallia, Tristain's territory would soon disappear from the map.

Henrietta, who bit her lip in remorse, said in a trembling voice.

"Your Holiness, even if you use power to force someone to obey, their heart can not obey you. I trust my friend, Louise. Regardless of your intentions, she will never willingly follow you."

"Of course I know."

Vittorio answered.

"There's no way to force her heart to obey. Because God lives in the heart."

After Henrietta's visit ended, Vittorio entered his dedicated chapel alone.

It was his daily task to pray to God and the Founder every morning and evening.

Vittorio, with sweat on his brow, knelt by the "Founder's Round Mirror", revealing his sins with a bitter expression.

“Founder..., Founder, spokesman of the noble God, great Founder who guides us. Please forgive your sinful servant, truly I have deceived too many people.”

The sin that the Pope admitted to was “deception”.

Even if this was for the greater good, that sin still couldn't be tolerated.

But the history of Romalia was an accumulation of false history.

You just had to look at the books secretly hidden in the church to know that the popes of the past were far from the saying “pure as driven snow”. Even the establishment of the Romalian Union Empire was not based on fact.

St. Forsythe, the first pope and disciple of Brimir, declared that Romalia was the place where the Founder had died. This was not the case.

The Founder Brimir was killed by Sasha, the Elven familiar “Gandálfr”, in the “Holy Land”.

But at present, the sins hidden in Vittorio's heart... were even heavier than all the sins that Romalia had collected so far, and was a betrayal of the people of Halkeginia.

The “Holy Land” had a “Magic Device” that can prevent the “Wind Stones” from going out of control. That is fact in a sense. Even during the long years that the Elves had

controlled the “Demon’s Gate”, they never knew that this major secret directly related to the “Holy Land”.

If Louise were to use the power of her awakened “Void”, it may be possible to stop the impending “Uprising” disaster of the continent.

However, in order to achieve the Founder’s desire of “Reconquista”, and to protect the future of all “Magi”, Vittorio couldn’t speak of this secret.

Not even Julio had been told of this secret.

Even if he heard this secret, he wouldn’t change his mind. However, once he had learned it, he would suffer the same sins as Vittorio.

Since Julio had been brought from the Romalian orphanage, his character wasn’t suited for bloody conspiracies. At first glance, he looked mature, but he was very pure, easily hurt, a straightforward and upright young man.

“It is enough for me to bear this sin alone.”

As the Pope who leads the people, he must fulfill the mission left by the Founder.

There was bound to be a hellish and tragic war. The Queen of Tristain is correct, once a “Holy War” broke out with another world, Halkeginia would shed more blood than the “Uprising”.

Thinking to here, he couldn't help but tremble at the depth of this sin.

After finishing his prayer, Vittorio stared at the relic of his mother "The Ruby of Fire".

"Founder. Did You ever feel despair about whether the God you prayed to didn't exist?"

Returning to the office after completing his prayer, a young man with heterochromatic eyes^[1] stood waiting in front of the door.

The person was Julio, who saluted Vittorio and reported.

"Your Holiness, the salvage operation for the "Gun" is completed. That Rhyme Dragon, the "Mother of the Sea" was a bit troublesome, but reluctantly agreed... If I didn't have the power of Vindálfir it would be dangerous."

"Did you kill it?"

"No. After being surrounded by the Templar Knights, it didn't know where to run."

"That's good. Those Rhyme Dragons have been protecting the "Holy Land" in our place for a long time, so I'd feel bad to kill them."

Vittorio seemed to relax, and touched his chest.

"So, is that thing really the same as me?"

“Yes, that should be right.”

Julio lowered his voice and reported.

“That ‘Weapon’ possess a nature that is very close to the Founder’s ‘Void’. It seems to act on the tiny particles that make up the world and causes an unimaginable explosion. The power can only be described through imagination... but it certainly far surpasses the ‘Jewel of Fire’ that was used by the King of Gallia.”

Hearing this, Vittorio hid his face in his hands, and showed a depressed expression.

“God, the most terrifying thing happened. The ‘Varyag’ finally got the power of the ‘Void’.”

“Yes, although it’s improbable... it’s too fast.”

Julio said nervously.

“Can you use that ‘Weapon’?”

“No, even with the knowledge of the ‘Mind of God’ it’s impossible to understand such a complex structure. But if it’s ‘Gandálfr’, or...

Julio spoke to her, and Vittorio sadly muttered.

“This is truly sinful. Even if we have to use this ‘Weapon’ of the enemies, we must win. Because this ‘Holy War’ will only end with the complete destruction of one side.”

“Indeed, that’s correct.”

Afterwards, Vittorio handed over the pistol that he just showed to Henrietta... The ‘Weapon’, created by the enemy, and Julio sighed heavily.

“Truly, I really don’t like guns.”

“You aren’t a magician. This kind of thing can be used for self-defense.”

After receiving the pistol, Julio hid the gun under his coat.

Then he looked at the hull of the “Ostland” that was anchored in the sea outside the window.

“...Can those two successfully complete the ‘Mission’?”

“I believe they will help accomplish it. He is a man who would die for love, and won’t commit the folly of Sasha from 6000 years ago.”

Vittorio whispered to himself in his heart.

“No, it’s not Sasha who is truly stupid... Perhaps it was ‘Him’, who loved his familiar.”

But he wouldn’t allow the same tragedy of 6000 years to unfold again.

“Because she deeply loves her familiar, she’ll definitely make the ‘Right Choice’ for this world.”

NOTES

1. [↑](#) The author literally describes heterochromia here.

CHAPTER 4:

THE CRUEL REALITY

Just after Louise left the room... Saito, lying alone on the bed, arranged his thoughts. Not daring to close his eyes, he thought about what he should do in the future.

The truth of the “Holy Land” revealed, the opposition between “Magi” and “Varyag”.

If the Pope’s words were true, it meant that the “Magi” were the ancestors of Louise and the other nobles of Halkeginia, and that the people of Earth, like himself, are the descendants of the “Varyag”.

However, Saito thought that this was suspicious instead.

It should be said that the “Varyag” army, seen in the dream of six thousand years ago, was wearing armor that resembled the heavy infantry of Ancient Greece. However, the Earth 6,000 years ago would still be in something like the Stone Ages... They wouldn’t possess that kind of military equipment.

Were the “Varyag”, like the “Magi”, an ancient civilized nation that used to exist on Earth...

However, those things weren't important. Whether or not the current people of Earth were the direct descendants of the "Varyag" didn't matter to the Pope at all.

Although Louise was very resolute, Saito didn't think that she could convince the Pope. The Pope would definitely use any means necessary to force Louise to cast Void magic on Earth.

"Say, is there a way to inform the Earth about this crisis?"

This was the first thought that came to Saito's mind.

Previously, a signal got through to his laptop once, and it received emails from Earth. If the "Door" to the Holy Land was opened, it could be possible to send a message to the Earth from this side. But that an army from another world was about to invade the Earth... Who would believe that kind of absurd story?

"I could simply take Louise and fly away."

No, even if they really did this, could they shake off pursuit by Romalia, not knowing how long his body would last at present?

"No, that won't do... I can't think of any good method."

Saito sprawled on the bed and held his aching head. Even if he wanted to discuss it with Derflinger, his partner was still asleep and not responding.

Just then, someone knocked on the door.

“Saito, I heard Ms. Vallière say that you’re already awake.”

It was Siesta and Tiffania holding replacement sheets. When Tiffania saw Saito, her deep blue eyes suddenly burst into tears and she hugged Saito.

“God, Saito... that’s great...”

“Ti-Tiffa...wow!”

On the body of the half-elf girl, miraculous objects holding the mass of melons, but also with a marshmallow-like “squish~”, squeezed against Saito’s body.

Seeing the blushing Saito, Siesta smiled sweetly

“Oh, Saito has completely recovered his vigor. I’ll report this to Ms. Vallière.”

“Don’t do that!”

Hearing Saito’s cry, Tiffania suddenly came back to herself, and released Saito.

“I’m sorry. I was so happy to hear the good news about you, Saito, I couldn’t help it...”

“Oh, uh, it’s okay...”

After Saito coughed, Tiffania said with a depressed look.

“Saito, I’m truly sorry...”

“It doesn’t matter. Besides, I totally enjoyed it...”

Saying that, Siesta immediately glared at him. Saito promptly covered his mouth.

“No, it’s not... It’s all my fault that Saito fainted.”

Tiffania’s long ears sadly hung down limp, and with this Saito figured it out. Tiffania still believed that it was her fault that Saito became the “Lífprásir”.

“It’s not your fault Tiffa. And thanks to Tiffa making me her familiar, I can protect Tiffa and Louise.”

“Saito...”

Large tears overflowed from Tiffania’s deep blue eyes.

At that time.

“Hey, Saito, you awake? People are worried about you.”

“As soon as your eyes open, you’re already busy flirting, lucky you.”

Guiche and Malicorne leaned their heads through the opened door. Behind them was also Colbert, Kirche, and Tabitha.

“Wait, everybody shouldn’t rush in here all at once. Saito just woke up!”

Siesta reminded everyone with her hands on her waist.

“Sorry, there are some things I’d like to ask Saito.”

Colbert said.

“I don’t mind, I can already get up.”

“No, I don’t mind if you continue to lay down, it’s alright to relax.”

Reaching out to stop Saito from getting out of bed, Colbert sat on a chair beside the bed.

“Saito, what happened in the “Holy Land”, can you tell us?”

Saito just realized this. He linked eye with Tiffania, and saw her shake her head. It didn’t appear that they’d been informed about the details.

“I know. Although it might be a little unbelievable for everybody...”

Then, Saito told the truth that the Pope revealed in the “Holy Land”.

Including that there was no “Magic Device” there to stop the wind stones from going out of control. The true face of the “Holy Land” was actually Saito’s homeland. Also about the

“Magi” and the “Varyag”, and the fact that the Founder Brimir and Saito were the same, both of them from a different world...

“.....”

After Saito finished speaking, the room was shrouded in a heavy silence.

Colbert, Kirche, Tabitha, Siesta, Tiffania and others already knew that Saito was a person from a different world. But this was actually the first time that Guiche and Malicorne had heard, and their mouths stupidly hung open.

“Wa-wait, you mean that you’re a person from a different world!”

“Ah, yeah...”

After Guiche spoke, Saito awkwardly nodded his head.

“So before, you said you came from Rub’ al-Khali...”

“Sorry, because I thought it would be too much trouble to explain... sorry.”

Saito brought his hands together, and apologized to Guiche and Malicorne.

Although the two were stunned for a while,

“Well, I originally thought there was a lot of differences between you and the people of this world... Oh, I really can’t think of you as a person from a different world.”

When Saito asked, “Are you angry with me?”

“No, even if you’re from a different world, Saito is still Saito.”, Guiche shrugged as he responded.

“Oh, you’re just a normal pervert, who’s become nothing more than a pervert from another world.”

Malicorne also cheerfully patted Saito’s shoulder.

“You guys... thanks.”

Seeing the normal attitude of the two towards him, warmed Saito’s heart.

“Say, are there cute girls in your world?”

“Oi, you.”

Faced with Guiche’s serious question, Saito answered, astonished.

“Hey, you always pay attention to that.”

“A-are there girls that like short, fat guys?”

“Oi, you guys, this ain’t a place to talk about those kinds of carefree things. Saito’s world and Halkeginia are currently

facing the possibility of war breaking out.”

With Kirche’s glare, the two immediately shrank back politely.

After hearing Saito’s story, Colbert continued to ponder with a thoughtful expression.

Saito had never seen him show such a sharp expression in class.

“Mr. Colbert?”

When Saito asked, Colbert finally cleared his throat and murmured.

“There’s no chance of winning.”

“What?”

“If war breaks out with Saito’s world, Halkeginia will undoubtedly lose.”

“...!”

Saito was shocked to hear how quickly Colbert reached that conclusion. He deserved to be called a scholar who had thoroughly studied the weapons and tools of Saito’s world, and his understanding on this point was faster than anyone else.

“Ri-right! It should be said that it’s absolutely impossible to win. On Earth at present, there are far more advanced weapons than the Zero fighter and the Tiger Tank.”

“Hey, what you said, it’s an exaggeration, right?”

Guiche responded.

“After all, that tank’s main cannon can even passed through the Elf’s ‘Reflection’, and the ‘Dragon’s Raiment’ that you pilot can fly faster than any Wind Dragon. How can those legendary weapons be everywhere?”

Saito held his head in worry, in the end what was the best way to explain it...?

“This, what if you compare the “Tiger Tank” with your broken golem?”

“Hey, that was rude.”

“This is just an example, so listen to me. If that ‘Tiger Tank’ is your golem, the tanks currently on Earth are like the ‘Knight Doll’ operated by Mjöðvitnir. Roughly speaking, the gap in performance is that big.”

“Wh-what did you say!”

This made Guiche shout.

The difference between the “Jörmungandr” made by Mjöðvitnir, and magically created golems was huge.

Jörmungandr almost had the same mobility as a human.

Although Saito was also unsure, the performance of current state-of-the-art weapons definitely far surpassed the antiques of the Second World War.

Not only tanks and fighter aircraft, but also combat helicopters, bombers, aircraft carriers, submarines, and destroyers ^[1]... Even a light machine gun can kill hundreds of people, while Halkeginian wizards chant their long spells.

“Saito, is this true?”

Guiche asked with the corner of his mouth slightly twitching.

“Yeah.”

“Are there really such terrible “Weapons” in your world?”

“Not only that, but thousands and thousands of them. And there are weapons that are dozens of times stronger than the “Jewel of Fire”... It wouldn’t be a problem to destroy a town, no, a country.”

Everyone fell into silence.

They were probably remembering when Gallia’s amphibious fleet^[2] was destroyed in a moment, and the nightmarish power of the “Jewel of Fire”. Weapons that were dozens of times stronger than the “Jewel of Fire”... the power was so unbelievable that even Saito couldn’t imagine it.

“Yet ultimately, His Holiness insisted on starting a war?”

This time Kirche spoke.

“Um, the Pope said he had a chance to win...”

“Don’t tell me the chance is Louise’s amazing magic?”

“Pretty much.”

Saito nodded. But it didn’t matter how amazing Louise’s “Void” was, it was unlikely to win against the Earth relying solely on that.

At that time, terrible thoughts appeared in Saito’s mind.

What if after a country was attacked from an unknown location with “Void”, another country would be counterattacked with nuclear weapons? What if the country that was attacked retaliates with nuclear weapons?

He heard that there are enough nuclear weapons on Earth to destroy it several hundred times over. If this kind of thing really happened, wouldn’t it lead to apocalyptic mutual self-destruction...?

“Don’t tell me the Pope has already thought that far?”

“Alas, this seems to be related to the issue of Halkeginia’s survival.”

Colbert whispered with a severe expression.

“But the ‘Door’ is clearly at the bottom of the sea, so how do you send the army?”

Kirche spoke the key question.

Saito definitely had that question as well. It was hard to imagine sending a large number of troops and vessels to that place. They wouldn’t send them one at a time... anyway, the Pope must have a method.

Guiche raised his hands, and looked up at the ceiling.

“Hey, Albion, Gallia, the Elves, and next we’re going to fight with another world... things are getting more and more outrageous, aren’t they.”

—

At the same time... Louise, who used an owl to find the Pope of Romalia, took a pegasus arranged by the templars and boarded the “St. Mark”, the warship exclusively used by the Pope.

The visit request was immediately accepted. Under the guidance of a young nun named Michaela, Louise went to the waiting office of Vittorio. Sure enough, as an important piece in the Pope’s plan, Louise wasn’t stopped.

Walking through the quiet atmosphere of the passageway, Louise chewed her lip.

To be honest, she didn't hesitate to board the Pope's private vessel.

Considering the things that Romalia had done previously, she couldn't preclude them grabbing her on the spot and using the Elven drug to deprive her of her reason.

"If they dare to do it, I'll use the "Void" to bomb the ship."

In her heart, Louise resolved herself.

She had been protected by Saito many times before. Desperately protecting her willful, sour, totally uncute self yet actively expressing his love. No, it's not only that. He clearly had an opportunity to return to his original world, but he voluntarily stayed for himself.

So how did she repay Saito. Not only did she only think of herself every time, she was jealous of Tiffa, Siesta, and the princess, but she also acted childishly.

"This time, it's my turn to protect Saito."

I promise to let Saito return to his original world...

"Your Holiness, Ms. La Vallière has come."

Arriving at the office's door, Michaela calmly spoke.

“Please let her enter.”

After Michaela opened the door, she let Louise enter the office.

The determined Louise walked in. She was determined that until she changed the Pope’s mind, she would refuse to leave this room.

“I am Louise Françoise Le Blanc de La Vallière, I thank your Holiness, the Pope, for allowing me to pay my respects, I feel truly honored.”

Using all of Tristain’s aristocratic etiquette, Louise paid her respect.

“I made you wait, Ms. Vallière.”

Vittorio stood up, and urged Louise to sit in a chair.

“No, it’s okay if I stand. Today I’ve come here to advise your Holiness, the Pope. I implore you to reconsider launching a “Holy War”. It is difficult for me to agree that using the power of the ‘Void’ to conquer Saito’s homeland is correct.”

“I know very well that you care about your familiar’s feelings.”

Vittorio answered with a steady smile.

“But I can’t agree with your request. This is certainly not a correct move. However, this war isn’t a confrontation

between good and evil, but simply a battle for survival. If we don't obtain new land to live on, sooner or later we'll perish. So we can only choose, Ms. Vallière. Weigh faith and compassion on the scales and choose to save Halkeginia."

The light of strong determination was contained in Vittorio's eyes, and made Louise feel a little timid.

What the Pope said was correct, that Halkeginia would perish again... that was a fact. Additionally, the power of the "Void" that was passed down to her by the Founder should really be used to save the world.

However, Louise didn't retreat.

There was an unbending belief in her own heart that resisted this correct argument.

Louise said as she glared at Vittorio with a provocative look.

"I don't plan on helping with the wild ambitions of your Holiness. If your Holiness will use the power of the Void no matter what, then I will kill myself right here."

"You have no way to do that."

"I'm serious, please do not underestimate my determination."

Louise answered resolutely.

“If this goes on, do you not care if you sacrifice your beloved familiar?”

“What?”

Louise’s eyes expanded when she heard the Pope’s words.

“Your Holiness, please, this... I don’t understand what you mean.”

This made Louise’s voice tremble.

She suddenly felt a tremendously terrible, detestable premonition flowing over her whole body.

Vittorio continued to speak.

“You should know, the ability of the final familiar ‘Lífþrasir’ is the ‘Magic Power Supply’ for those who possess the void. As long as ‘Lífþrasir’ is still alive, he will continue to supply his life to all who possess the Void.”

“Life...?”

Louise couldn’t help but be struck dumb.

“It seems you didn’t hear this.”

“Because Saito didn’t say a thing...”

What the final familiar supplied those who possess the Void wasn’t spiritual power, but his life.

There was no way Saito didn't realize this. No, it wasn't possible. In order to not worry me, he definitely kept it to himself and didn't reveal it.

"Ms. Vallière, even if you don't use the power of the 'Void', his life will run dry one day. This is the fate that the familiar 'Lífprásir' bears... and even if you and the other contractor, Miss Westwood, lose your lives, once the familiar runes have been engraved they won't disappear."

Even the Pope's words did not enter Louise's head anymore.

Saito would die. Just this thought caused Louise's mind to furiously spin.

It turns out that at that time, Saito fainted because of this!

"Even if Ms. Vallière doesn't use the 'Void', his life will be exhausted. At most it will support him for a few more days, so do you want his death to be pointless?"

Louise fell to the floor like a puppet with its strings cut.

If she were to continue to do nothing, Saito would die. Even if Louise, the master, died, it wouldn't change his destiny.

Saito, would die?

For Louise, that was like the end of the world.

At that time, Vittorio, with eyes full of compassion, spoke to Louise.

“But there is only one way to save him. And it’s the only way to save Halkeginia and stop the revival of the Void.”

NOTES

1. ↑ TL: the raws say “Aegis Ship”, but Aegis is a defense system that is normally installed on a destroyer. So with a list of combat equipment, I listed the vessel the system is installed on as opposed to making up a ship type
2. ↑ TL: Previously referred to as the dual-use fleet, but militarily amphibious is a more accurate translation

CHAPTER 5:

THE NUCLEAR SUBMARINE

After listening to Saito's explanation, Guiche's group concluded that first they were to comply with the judgment of Henrietta. This was a matter of course since the Knight Corps of the Water Spirit were Imperial Guards directly subordinate to Henrietta.

Henrietta originally opposed going to war with the Elves - presumably, she wouldn't support this new "Holy War". However, that wasn't only for Tristain, but it was an event related to the future of Halkeginia. Considering the political situation, there was no way to predict what decision Henrietta would make at that time.

After everyone had left the room, Saito started to care for Derflinger's blade as he laid alone on the bed.

But there still seemed to be no sign of Saito's noisy partner regaining consciousness.

"Derf, I have so many things I want to ask you..."

During Saito's lonely soliloquy...

Suddenly there was a tap on the door.

“Saito, dinner’s ready. Is it a good time to eat?”

Entering the room was Siesta, carrying a tray with tableware on it.

What was brought was freshly-made toasted bread, and the fragrant smell of stew wafting around.

“Thank you, Siesta. looks delicious.”

The smell made Saito’s stomach grumble. It seemed that his appetite had recovered after a little rest.

“This is stewed venison, and oven-toasted bread. This ship is really amazing. After Mr. Colbert remodeled the kitchen, even a commoner like me can easily use the fire.”

Siesta placed the tray on the table besides the bed. There wasn’t only bread and stew on the tray. There was also cheese, boiled eggs with their shells peeled, and sliced apples.

“Thanks for the food.”^[1]

Saito brought his hands together and was about to get up from bed.

But Siesta reached out and stopped him.

“Ah, it’s alright to not get out of bed. Let me feed you.”

“What?”

Siesta squeezed Saito back into bed with a laugh and smile.

“The-there’s no need, I’m fine.”

“No, what if you faint again?”

Saying that, Siesta shook her finger and gently pressed it against Saito’s mouth. Saito went “Ah...”, then obediently closed his mouth. He’d known for a long time that Siesta could be particularly stubborn at these sorts of times, and that resistance was futile.

Siesta tore the bread with her fingers and scooped up some hot stew. Nobles like Louise would hardly ever eat such low-class meals, but Saito often enjoyed this type of bread made by old man Marteau.

Then Siesta brought a piece of bread with stew on it to Saito’s lips.

“Come on, Saito, open your mouth.”

Then she blushed a little.

“This... it’s more embarrassing than I thought.”

“Yeah...”

Saito, with his pulse racing, opened his mouth and ate the bread.

“Hey! That’s my finger, Saito!”

“So-sorry!”

“Ah, it’s alright, Saito. I was just a little startled.”

He watched Siesta happily interlace her fingers.

“How... does it taste?”

“Mm, very delicious!”

Saito frankly said his thoughts. Although he didn’t know much about cooking, the soup’s stock was made well, and tasted absolutely delicious.

“This stew was made with Ms. Vallière’s wine.”

“Oh, without asking her permission? Won’t she be angry...?”

“Don’t worry. I’ve already watered down the wine in the bottle.”

“That will get exposed...”

Saito spoke, astonished, to Siesta’s nonchalant face.

“Do you want some warm wine? It will warm your body up.”

“Well, if it’s only a little...”

To be honest, he was worried about the Earth and not really in the mood to drink wine. But he also felt bad wasting

Siesta's good intentions.

After pouring the wine into a glass, Siesta handed it to Saito. As the glass was given to him, Saito suddenly felt dizzy and caused some of the wine to spill.

"Oops... Sorry."

"Oh, you're fine Saito!. I'll clean it up right away."

Siesta promptly grabbed a cloth and started to wipe up the wine that spilled on Saito's chest.



“Si, Siesta?”

This caused Saito to shout. Siesta pressed her chest against Saito’s arm as she leaned her upper body forward.

“Wo-woah...!”

Unlike Louise’s dumplings, there was a heavy “squish-like” feeling. Although not as good as Tiffania’s big melons, Siesta’s chest was also quite destructive.

Tiffania’s magic-like breasts were amazing too. However, for a Japanese like Saito, it was the truth that they could be said to enter the territory of fantasy - being too godly, perhaps even a little unrealistic.

In contrast, Siesta had black hair, and was of about one-eighth Japanese descent. She kind-of felt like a classmate, an irresistible feeling... what was to be said, was that the sense of reality was much stronger.

And what is even worse is that, as a commoner, Siesta actually didn’t wear underwear.

None of the girls of that world wore underwear.

Seeing this, blood suddenly spurted from his nose.^[2]

“Oh, that’s not okay. Saito, please take off your clothes.”

“Fo, for this much, it’s not a problem.”

“That’s not okay. What will you do if you catch a cold, come on!”

With a squish-squish, Siesta’s chest squeezed against his, with a squish.

“Oh, woah...”

Saito mobilized all his willpower, and withstood Siesta’s round of attack.

Louise was trying to persuade the Pope for him. With that in mind, Saito felt sorry for Louise. Trying to calm down, Saito meditated “calm state of mind, calm state of mind”, in his mind... Oh, did his state of mind grow calm?^[3]

“Oh, Siesta?”

“Wh-what is it?”

Squish.

“This, I feel is a little inconvenient...”

Hearing Saito say this, Siesta said, “Ahhhhhh”, sighing for a long time.

“I understand. After all, Saito already has Louise.”

“...Mm.”

“Uhh, so it’s a no-go? Even though I tried to appeal to you this much?”

“Sorry.”

“It’s alright. After all, I like this sort of Saito.”

The seemingly frustrated Siesta pouted, and sat next to Saito.

Then she put her head on Saito’s shoulder.

“...Siesta?”

“Really, I’m also really upset.”

Siesta said.

“At this rate, war will break out with the world that you, Saito..... and my great-grandfather came from, won’t it? Do they want to repeat what happened one year ago?”

Siesta, with a quivering voice, stared uneasily at Saito.

This scared Saito. During the invasion of the Albion Army a year ago, Siesta’s hometown of Tarbes was destroyed in a fire.

“Relax, I won’t let that happen. Louise and I will find a way.”

“Saito...”

Siesta nodded her head.

Not only to stop the Pope's ambitions, but also to save the Earth and Halkeginia at the same time... Saito held Siesta's shivering shoulders, trying to reassure her while strengthening his determination.

Things went like that for a while... Saito didn't know whether Siesta drank the wine, but she smoothly slipped off to sleep with her head on his chest. Siesta was an expert when it came to sleep. Once she falls asleep it would take at least an hour for her to wake up.

There's nothing he could do... With a wry smile, Saito let Siesta lay in his bed.

If he were to let Louise see that, it could cause a misunderstanding...

"How come Louise hasn't come back..."

All of a sudden, a slight anxiety appeared in Saito's heart.

At this time, Louise should be boarding the Romalian vessel and persuading the Pope.

Maybe she had lost her head, attacked the Pope with "Explosion", and was arrested on the spot. After all, although she usually was a model noble, she had a lot of opinions about everything. However, once her emotions erupted, it wouldn't matter if the opponent is a princess or the Pope, she treated everyone as equals.

“Did it really not matter to let her go by herself?”

The fearful Saito looked through the cabin’s porthole towards the place the Romalian fleet was gathered.

At that time, Saito frowned.

A huge lumpy black object appeared on the pitch-black sea. A magic light like a searchlight was projected from the surrounding ships to illuminate the object.

“... What’s that?”

With a bad premonition emerging from his heart, Saito approached the porthole.

At a glance, four Romalian ships floating in the air tried to lift the huge lumpy object with a large number of devices that were similar to chains.

The entire body was a circular arc, with a cylindrical profile that was a total length of 100 meters.

“Oh, it-it can’t be...!”

Discovering what the lumpy object truly was, Saito’s face turned blue.

It was the “Nuclear Submarine” that should’ve been sleeping in the “Holy Land”.

“... What are those bastards thinking!”

Saito grabbed Derflinger from the edge of the bed and immediately rushed out of the room. Although he didn't have the physical strength to stand up, he was barely able to move his body, relying on the strength of the "Gandálfr".

Arriving on the deck of the "Ostland", Saito's body emerged from the side of the ship. He saw the huge cylindrical lump being slowly pulled from the sea by the numerous chains tied to it.

"They want to pull the nuclear submarine up to the surface of the sea."

This made Saito break out in a cold sweat. Why was the Romalian Army trying to salvage the "Nuclear Submarine" that had sunk in the "Holy Land"?

At that time, the submarine, salvaged from the bottom of the sea, was constantly surrounded by small explosions as it hung in midair. Saito saw Romalia's Knights Templar neatly lined up on the deck of their ships, launching magic arrows towards the submarine together.

"Please, what do they think they're doing...!"

The blue-faced Saito couldn't help but shout. Although it was not easy to damage a nuclear submarine, it was only a matter of time if they were to continue.

"They basically don't know what a terrible thing that is!"

According to Derflinger, the “Nuclear Submarine” had completely ceased to function, and apparently there was no danger of radiation leakage. But in the end that was the power aspect of it. As for the things inside the ship... the “Weapons” he was too scared to name were still usable.

“I have to stop them...”

Saito, with an expression full of anxiety, grabbed the guardrail. The “Ostland” was a long way from the Romalian fleet, and the slung-up “Nuclear Submarine” was flying high in the sky.

“What’s wrong?”

At that time, a voice came from behind Saito.

Looking back, it was Tabitha with a book under her arm.

“Tabitha!”

Saito grabbed Tabitha’s shoulder, like she was a lifesaver. Tabitha suddenly opened her eyes in surprise, and blushed.

“...What’s wrong?”

“Can you use magic to send me to that Romalian ship?”

“What?”

“That is a bomb of my world, if I don’t stop them, things will get serious.”

Tabitha looked at the Romalian fleet, and thought for a bit... then she shook her head.

“No. If you board a Romalian ship without permission, it will lead to a diplomatic issue. You and I will be arrested.”

“Oh, you’re right... No, right now isn’t the time to worry about that!”

Saito shouted desperately. Although he didn’t know the structure of nuclear weapons, they shouldn’t easily explode if their exterior is destroyed. However, the surroundings could be accidentally exposed to radiation.

“...I know.”

Possibly sensing Saito’s urgency... Tabitha nodded her head, and whistled towards the sea. Not long after came the sound of buzzing. Sylphid, with her wings spread, landed on the deck of the ship.

“Big Sis, what’s wrong? Chirp.”

“Mount up.”

Tabitha quickly sat on Sylphid’s back, and Saito hugged her waist.

“Chirp, chirp. A late-night date! Big Sis is doing it!”

Not knowing she was misunderstanding, Sylphid happily cried.

“Ah, Sylphid is deeply moved. Big Sis is finally planning to lay eggs, so she won’t have to worry about the horny maid and the peach-haired washboard girl, chirp.”

“...”

Tabitha knocked Sylphid on the head with her wand.

“What are you doing! It’d be better if Big Sis was honest with herself sooner.”

Thump! The red-faced Tabitha continued to hit Sylphid with a thump. However, the rhyme dragon’s head was protected by hard scales, and Sylphid didn’t feel wounded at all.

“Hurry up, close on that ship.”

Then Tabitha pointed her wand at the ship floating in the air.

“Piece of cake, chirp!”

Sylphid took off from the deck and rushed 200 feet up in the air in a flash. Even the magic “Fly” wasn’t as fast. After cutting through the wind as they continued to ascend, they arrived above the Romalian ship floating in the air.

“It’s a wind dragon!”



“What are you doing here!”

All the Romalian Knights Templar lined up nicely on the deck faced the wind dragon that suddenly appeared overhead, and a disturbance broke out.

At that time, a Templar Knight stepped out of the chaotic formation. He was a tall, slender man with his black hair parted down the middle, and he could be called a bishounen^[4], based on his looks.

“That guy...”

Saito remembered that pompous-like mug. He was, surely... though Saito had forgotten his name, he was the guy who had raised a dispute with Saito and the others before, in that Romalian city.

“I am the captain of the Knights Templar of the order of Alieste, Carlo Christiano Trompontino. I’m warning you two, ultimately who allowed you to fly free over the Holy Romalian Fleet!”

Carlo pointed his holy wand at Saito and Tabitha above, raging loudly.

“Wait, I am Saito... Knight of the Queen of Tristain, Hiraga Saito.”

“What? You’re the apprentice knight Hiraga... That commoner hero!”

Hearing Saito's name, Carlo scornfully laughed.

"Trivial commoner of Tristain, what are you doing here!"

"You need to stop using magic to attack that lump of scrap metal right now! Otherwise some serious consequences will occur!"

"What did you say?"

Carlo, shrugging his shoulders, turned to look at the subordinate knights behind him.

"What did that page just say, did you hear him?"

"The sound of the wind is too strong, I can't hear clearly."

The knight's response made Carlo grin, and he lifted his holy wand like a baton, giving orders to his subordinates.

"All devout believers of God and the Founder Brimir, shoot them down!"

"What..."

The Knights Templar began to chant spells together.

"Sylphid, circle to the right, dodge."

Tabitha anxiously said, it rarely being heard in her voice.

"Please, don't be hard on the dragon, okay, chirp!"

From the tips of the orderly row of holy wands, numerous arrows of light were launched.

“Woah!”

Sylphid quickly banked hard, and almost threw Saito off.

“Hold on tight.”

Hearing Tabitha’s warning, Saito reached out and hugged Tabitha’s waist, and pulled his body close.

At that moment, Tabitha gradually flushed to her ears.

“Big Sis is really energetic, chirp!

Thump, thump.

“Big Sis is blushing, chirp, it’s really cute.”

The orderly row of Knights Templar fired countless “Magic Arrows” at Saito and Tabitha. However Tabitha, as calm as ever, lifted her huge staff, that was as big as she was, and quickly chanted a spell, completing the magic.

“Windy Icicle.”

That was the wind and water composite spell that Tabitha excelled at. The power was comparable to the square class spell Frostbolt, and knocked down the Templars’ “Magic Arrows” one after the other.

“Wh, what!”

“Don’t underestimate her, that magician is very powerful!”

“The wind dragon, aiming for the wind dragon will work!”

Seeing Tabitha’s powerful magic, the Knights Templar began to panic.

“Persuasion is pointless, there’s no other way...”

With a sigh, Saito gripped Derflinger’s hilt, and the rune on his left hand glowed.

“Tabitha, launch me in the middle of them.”

“Roger.”, Tabitha nodded shortly.

Sylphid circled over the heads of the Knights Templar, then dived towards the deck of the ship. At the same time, Saito dexterously jumped into the air with Derflinger in his hand.

Carlo roared with his face flushed in anger.

“Capture him! This is an invasion of Romalia, it doesn’t matter if you kill him!”

The holy wand in Carlo’s hand produced a blade of flames that was about two feet long. This was the fire system’s “Blade” magic, and a burning flame slipped past the tip of Saito’s nose.

“Enough is enough, listen to what I’m saying!”

Saito, moving to avoid the “Blade”, jabbed the hilt of Derflinger into the startled Carlo’s gut.

“Captain!”

Seeing their commander captured, the Knights Templar fell into chaos. Saito quickly charged into their formation, and knocked down the dumbfounded knights one after another.

“Surround him! Surround him and kill him!”

Someone shouted at that point. Numerous “Magic Arrows” launched from the tips of the wands in the Knights Templar’ hands. Saito blocked the arrows with Derflinger. Even if Derflinger was asleep, he was still responsible for absorbing magic.

“What!”

The Knights Templar who witnessed the power of “Gandálfr” couldn’t help but feel terrified.

“...He really is a stubborn guy.”

The panting Saito looked around at the surrounding Knights Templar. If this was the normal Saito, he wouldn’t be panting to this degree. As expected, under the influence of the “Lífþrasir” runes, the consumption of physical strength was excessive.

“Hey, listen to me. That is something that you absolutely can not touch!”

“Be quiet, intruder!”

Even though Saito shouted, the Knights Templar still turned a deaf ear. Aiming at the stopped Saito, the tips of the lined up wands emitted red and blue lights.

“Oh...”

Saito could only re-grasp Derflinger in both of his hands.

At this moment... the sound of buzzing came. Looking up, Saito discovered a large wind dragon which flew over his head, which wasn't Sylphid.

“Okay, okay, everybody wait a moment and listen to what he's saying.”

The young priest riding on the back of Azuro said in a cheerful voice.

“Milord, Caesar...”

Somebody said that. With that, the Knights Templar immediately raised their wands, and saluted the priest.

“Julio, you...”

Saito glared at Julio as he landed on the deck.

In any case, even if he was a detestable opponent, he would listen to what a person would say. At least a little better than this group of Knights Templar.

“Saito, why are you causing a ruckus on our ship?”

“So in the end, what do you think you’re doing dragging up this kind of thing?”

“You need to ask, isn’t the answer clear? That ‘Weapon’ is a gift given to us by the Founder Brimir, and we were just grateful to use it.”

Julio lightly spoke.

“You said use?”

“Of course. If we want to fight the “Varyag”, we require powerful weapons. We aren’t willingly wanting to use the enemy’s ‘Weapons’... but ultimately we’re realists, and can never let go of something we can use.”

“Do you know what that thing actually is? That’s...”

An extremely terrifying bomb... speaking to here, Saito stalled. It would be bad if he let the Romalians know what this is.

“Oh, don’t worry. It won’t explode if you just destroy the outer shell with magic. You need more power to use this thing, right?”

“What...”

Hearing the words Julio spoke, Saito couldn't help but gasp in shock

Don't tell me he knows what “That thing” inside is...?

“Of course I know.”

Saying, Julio pointed at his forehead.

“‘Mjöðvitnir’ is ‘The Mind of God’. Although I can't freely use the weapons of the “Holy Land” like you, I can understand the theoretical structure. This is what the knowledge of the ‘Mjöðvitnir’ told me. Incredibly, the power of the void actually sleeps inside this cylindrical object... at least close to the the nature of the void. The destructive power may be even more terrible than the King of Gaulia's ‘Jewel of Fire’.”

“Don't tell me the Pope is going to use that thing against the Earth!”

Saito couldn't help but shout. Since he knew their true colors, and they also recovered this from the bottom of the sea... didn't that confirm that?

But Julio shook his head with regret.

“No, I just said that the structure of this terrible ‘Weapon’ is very complex. Unfortunately, the knowledge we possess is insufficient to detonate it

Then Julio said in a semi-joking tone.

“However, Saito... maybe you could use it easily with the power of ‘Gandálfr’.”

“That bastard...”

This startled Saito. Previously, when he was at the “Dragon’s Nest” and touched the submarine, the runes on his left hand glowed. Then, how to manipulate that “Weapon” flowed into his mind. Although it was not enough to launch the ballistic missile, by solving the safety equipment issue, it was not impossible to make it detonate.

“Can you do it, Gandálfr?”

Julio’s crescent eyes stared sharply

“How is it, Saito? If it’s convenient, can you teach us how to use it?”

“Don’t joke around! Once that weapon is used, we’re doomed! It’s that dreadful! You saw the destructive power of the ‘Jewel of Fire’, right? There won’t be anything left.”

“Well, that’s right. However, there’s no point if we don’t do this. This “Holy War” isn’t a game, but a war on which we’re gambling our existence.”

Julio said with a serious expression. His normal carefree expression had disappeared without a trace, his expression

could even be called anxious.

Tightly holding Derflinger's hilt, Saito thought that Julio was truly desperate. After all, that could relate to the survival of the world... but he couldn't relax either. Even though they didn't know now, wouldn't mean that they wouldn't figure it out one day, and he absolutely couldn't let them use that thing against the Earth.

"Julio, I don't say stupid things. Let that thing sink back to the ocean floor."

"And if I refuse?"

"Well... even if it's tough, I'm going to stop you."

Saito pointed the blade tip of Derflinger at Julio.

"It seems like persuasion is ineffective, 'Brother'."

Reluctantly shaking his head, Julio pulled out the slender saber sheathed at his waist. At the same time, the Knights Templar behind Julio raised their holy wands one after another.

"Don't interfere you guys, this is a contest between men."

"Tabitha, it's okay, you don't need to help me."

Saito was also reminded of Tabitha overhead. A fierce ice storm hung at Tabitha's side, and was ready to cast a

powerful square rank spell on Julio and the Knights Templar. Saito didn't want to involve Tabitha in this.

"Mount Azuro, Julio. You can't beat 'Gandálfr' when he's holding a sword."

"What are you saying? Aren't you pretty weak right now?"

Saito was silenced by Julio's words. The present Saito's vision was definitely blurry, and the muscles of his entire body were protesting. If Derflinger fell from his hand, and he lost the power of 'Gandálfr', he would definitely collapse on the spot.

"But I will still beat you."

As soon as the words left his mouth, Saito immediately swung his sword like a gale. Julio reacted quickly, with a speed totally unlike a priest, blocking Saito's sword. However, his judgment was mistaken. Under the full power swing of 'Gandálfr' the slender saber was easily cut in two. After all, although the sword in Saito's hand was not engraved with its maker's name, it was a true "Sword" given by Brimir, that also had "Harden" and "Stabilize" magic cast on it.

An instant victory.

Saito held Derflinger's blade against Julio's throat.

"That was too much, 'Gandálfr'."

“Drop that back in the ocean right now.”

“Sorry, I can’t do that.”

Suddenly a “Bang!” sound was heard. Instantly, Saito felt a burning pain in his knee.

“...Wh, at...”

This couldn’t help but make Saito let go of Derflinger. All the strength in his body was suddenly exhausted, and Saito fell to the ground on the spot.

“You’re too careless, Saito. Don’t think that the ‘Gandálfr’ is the only one who knows how to use the ‘Weapons’ of the ‘Varyag’.”

Something in Julio’s palm flashed. It was an automatic pistol.

“Bastard, using a gun is dirty...”

Saito, who had fallen to the ground, looked fiercely up at Julio.

“Under these circumstances, you’re still saying that. Even we don’t know how many time we’ve soiled our hands, and how many things have been sacrificed. In order to recover the “Holy Land”, we even formed an alliance with the Elves and used the weapons of the “Enemy”. This has nothing to do with being dirty, this is a fight for survival.”

“Oh...”

When Saito reached out for Derflinger that had landed on the ground, Julio immediately kicked Derflinger to the side of the deck.

At this moment, an “Ice Javalin” aimed straight at Julio.

Tabitha, burning with anger, launched “Windy Icicle”.

“Oops!”

Julio quickly jumped to escape.

“Tabitha!”

Saito shouted.

Tabitha chanted the “Blade” spell, and jumped to the deck from Sylphid’s back.

Seeing that Saito was injured, the usually-calm Tabitha lost her reason to anger.

Suddenly, the tip of a wand pressed against Tabitha’s back, who was about to charge Julio.

“...!”

“Don’t move, I don’t want to hurt you, Big Sister.”

This stopped Tabitha. When did she get there... the one who appeared behind Tabitha was her identical twin Josette.

Tabitha couldn't help but shudder. It shouldn't be possible, no matter how strong a magician they were, to slip behind she who was once a Knight of Parterre without her notice. Not to mention that Josette didn't have any training, and just was an ordinary nun..."

At this point, Tabitha suddenly remembered what Castel Mall, who had served her father, had said.

He said that her uncle, King Joseph, the holder of the "Void", could use the wonderful magic of instantaneous movement.

"Please, put away your wand. If you hurt Julio, I won't forgive you, Big Sister."

Josette spoke with an oppressive feeling. If Tabitha made any rash moves, Josette wouldn't hesitate to cast a Void spell.

"..."

Tabitha dropped the wand in her hand. The calm part of her mind judged that reckless action now wouldn't lead to Saito's rescue.

"You saved me, Josette."

Julio smiled, and looked down at Saito who fell to the deck.

"Saito, to be honest, I originally expected you to cooperate with us."

“You wish, bastard!”

The angry Saito gnashed his teeth.

“But you are already a person of this world, aren’t you? You’re not only the hero of Tristain, but you also have many friends. Besides, the lover you adore... Even though this Halkeginia is facing the verge of destruction, you still think that your native home is more important?”

“...”

Indeed, saving the Earth would mean leaving Halkeginia to fend for itself. In the event of a huge uprising of Wind Stone, the living space would be reduced by half.

That could cause many people to be sacrificed.

There could even be people he knew.

“However, even so... I’m still a person of Earth...”

His Mom and Dad took care of him as he grew up... He was the ordinary high school student, Hiraga Saito.

It was impossible for him to conquer Earth, for Halkeginia’s sake.

Saito silently glared at Julio.

“I see... then there’s nothing we can do. After all, that’s your choice.”

With a sad face, Julio shook his head. Though it could be in his imagination... Saito thought that it wasn't Julio's usual, unfathomable, pose. He thought that he felt sad for Saito, in earnest.

"Saito, you are under arrest. The crime is invading a Romalian vessel... well, and so on. It's fortunate for you that you will be not be put before the Inquisition for defying the Knights Templar.

"Don't... joke around..."

Saito desperately struggled, trying to stand up.

However, his body was already not listening to him... At most he could only move a finger.

"Dammit, it's going like this again..."

"Julio, leave Saito alone!"

At this time, a familiar sound arrived at the deck of the ship.

"Oh...?"

That caused Saito to abruptly lift his head.

She was at the other end of his line of sight.

A cloak with the mark of a lily fluttered in the wind, and pink-blond hair glittered as it was bathed in the glow of the

twin moons. Her deep-brown eyes emitted an intense rage, and the tip of her wand was pointed at Julio.

The figure of a majestic goddess...

“Loui...se...?”

Saito, still laying on the ground, called the name of his beloved master.

How did you get here... that question was no longer important. Power flowed through his body just by seeing her.

After Julio raised his hand and withdrew, Louise rushed to Saito’s side.

“What’s wrong with you, Saito! Look at the grave wounds that you have suffered!”

Seeing the Saito, who was bloodied, huge tears overflowed from Louise’s eyes.

“Louise, how did you...?”

“Because I saw you fly here on Sylphid. And then a fight broke out on the ship... so I hurriedly used “Teleport” to fly here.

Holding Saito’s cool hand, Louise yelled at Julio.

“Quickly, treat Saito!”

“Relax, that injury isn’t life-threatening. We really can’t kill him either.”

“I don’t care, hurry up!”

Julio nodded his head, then called for a magician who could use healing magic.

“Saito, cheer up a little... I beg you, don’t die...”

Tightly holding Saito’s hand, Louise whispered a prayer.

However, Louise’s attitude made Saito feel subtly wrong. No, he was very grateful for her concern, but something felt odd...

Saito rolled over and asked.

“Say, Louise...”

“What?”

“What happened with the Pope?”

Suddenly Louise’s expression stiffened

“...Louise?”

“Ah, Saito... this, I...”

Large teardrops fell from Louise’s dark brown eyes, and moistened Saito’s cheek.

“Wha? Wha? What?”

This puzzled Saito.

“Louise, hey, what happened, Louise...?”

“I’m sorry... I’m sorry, Saito...”

“What’s wrong, Louise... why exactly do you want to apologize...?”

Louise gently released Saito’s hand... then said something unbelievable.

“I want to conquer Saito’s homeland, and save Halkeginia.”

“What...!”

Hearing this, Saito was speechless. The blow was too great, he couldn’t even make a sound.

“But, before you... didn’t say...”

“Louise... This, what’s going on? Answer me, Louise...!”

As she turned around, Saito desperately reached out toward Louise’s back as she was about to leave.

However, the magicians who’d been found to heal Saito, immediately surrounded him, blocking his view of Louise.

“Louise... Louise...oh...”

The magicians cast “Sleep” magic on the resisting Saito.

The sandman struck immediately, and Saito’s consciousness gradually fell into darkness.

“...I’m sorry.”

At the end it seemed like he heard that be said.

NOTES

1. ↑ This is a textbook example of “itadakimasu”, which can be translated in a myriad of different ways. I have chosen to localise it here.”
2. ↑ What is spurted is not mentioned in the raw material, but the context makes it clear that it is blood.
3. ↑ This is a Daoist mantra for warding off evil- “明鏡止水”
4. ↑ Beautiful boy.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bish%C5%8Dnen>

CHAPTER 6:

THE PRISON ISLAND (CHÂTEAU D'IF)

The “Vysendal”, that Henrietta was embarked on, was the flagship of the Kingdom of Tristain’s fleet, and was a “Dragon Carrier” built to attack Albion. That special new type of ship was equipped with a long and wide deck so a large number of dragon knights could take off from it. After the Battle of Albion, it became the ship that was used for the royal family.

Late at night... in an office of the “Vysendal” that lay anchored at sea, Henrietta sighed in disgust by herself.

“It unexpectedly developed into this...”

Henrietta, who was trying to avoid a war, couldn’t accept the truth about the “Holy Land” that came from Pope Vittorio’s mouth, or the plan to invade another world.

If war were to break out with another world, it would definitely be a miserable scene where blood flows like water. A terrible hell, that never had been seen in the history of Halkeginia, would be born. And, the one forced to raise the banner of war was still Henrietta’s most important friend.

“God, Louise...”

Henrietta, with her eyes closed, clenched her hands and quietly prayed.

Several months ago... She saw that a “Jewel of Fire” the size of a stone burned Gaulia’s amphibious fleet and instantly killed tens of thousands of lives. But the Pope wanted to force Louise to bear an even more terrible slaughter than that tragedy.

“I will absolutely never let this happen.”

Not only for Louise, but also the soldiers of Tristain and all the people of Halkeginia. In any case, she must stop the crazy actions of Romalia...

“But what can I do? My strength is truly too weak.”

She really hopes there is a point they can discuss.

Her beloved mother, Marianna, was in the distant Tristain. The sharp-tongued Mazarin, who always secretly supported Henrietta, was currently with Tristain’s main force located with “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands”. Meeting them would take a long time.

At that time, the sound of quiet knocking came from the office door. Three loud, followed by two quiet knocks... In the palace, only one person was allowed to use this method of knocking.

“Enter.”

“Yes, my apologies, Your Majesty.”

Entering the office short of breath was Agnes, the commander of the Musketeer Corps. Seeing the panicked expression of the usually calm commander of the musketeers, Henrietta asked in surprise.

“What’s the matter, Agnes? It’s so late.”

“Yes, I’m sorry. Because an emergency happened...”

“What is it?”

Henrietta’s expression suddenly became severe.

“Your Majesty’s knight, Saito, has been detained by Romalia.”

“What did you say?!”

Henrietta, with her eyes wide open, couldn’t help but exclaim.

Agnes then reported what happened. According to the information from the Romalian side, Saito had broken into a Romalian warship, caused a disturbance and injured several Templars. Unreasonably breaking into a warship of another country, then causing trouble on that ship was undoubtedly a crime. It was not surprising that it had become a major

diplomatic issue with Romalia, since he still was a royal knight.

“Is this true?”

Henrietta asked with an expression like she’d been hit.

“It seems to be true, more the pity.”

“Really...”

But Henrietta was doubtful about this statement.

Henrietta was very clear that Saito would never cause trouble without reason. He wasn’t the hot-blooded sort of person that would do this sort of thing, and there had to be a reason for it.

After listening to the report, Henrietta, who had finally calmed down, continued to question Agnes.

“So, where is Saito now?”

If he’s being detained, is it on a Romalian ship? He won’t face the infamous Romalian Inquisition... this concern floated in her mind.

“According to the report, he was transferred to the island named Château d’If.”

“Château d’If? Where is that?”

“Yes, in fact I also don’t know the details, but I heard that it was built on an isolated island floating off the shore of ‘Eumenes’. It’s an Elven prison.

“Elven prison? How can he be kept there?”

“If they keep Saito locked up on a Romalian ship, there is the danger of him escaping. They will definitely extradite him to the Elven Council after they finish negotiations. Most of his crimes were escaping from Adyl, and invading the ‘Devil’s Gate’... After all, it will be difficult for us to use diplomatic channels when he becomes a prisoner of the Elves.”

“When did the relationship between his Holiness and the Elves, who used to be an enemy, become so good?”

Henrietta can’t help but be sarcastic as she bites her lip, then issues an order.

“Immediately send a protest to Romalia.”

“Will Romalia listen?”

“No, they will definitely turn a deaf ear.”

The protest to Romalia is, at best, a superficial effort, and Henrietta had another plan.

“Saito must be rescued from the hands of Romalia...”

The Pope will detain Saito, there definitely has to be a purpose.

Perhaps because of his power as a familiar, he would be the key to launching the “Ancestor’s Void”, or used as a hostage to threaten Louise. Moreover, specifically transferring him to an Elven prison would mostly be to separate Saito and Louise...

In other words, if our side has our hands on Saito, maybe we can force the Pope to negotiate.

If you really wanted to talk, compared to Saito, it would be better to grab the two bearers of the “Void”, Louise and Tiffania. However, after they boarded the Romalian ship a few hours ago, they hadn’t returned. Of course, Henrietta also negotiated requesting their release, but was rejected by Romalia.

“Perhaps I should consider that both of them have fallen into the hands of the Pope...”

Henrietta remembered the discussion she just had with Vittorio and couldn’t help but tremble.

If, as the Queen of Tristain, she took action in order to save Louise and the others, it would definitely start a full-scale war with Romalia. That would lead to Tristain repeating the mistakes of Albion, but, anyway, that can be avoided.

With this in mind, it's good news that Saito is being moved to the Elven prison.

After all, Romalia is extraditing Saito to the Elves as a "criminal". The "diplomatic channels" is certainly useless with the Elves, but letting one trivial prisoner escape probably won't lead to national opposition. Of course, that still was a dangerous plan, but at least they could find an excuse to avoid an all-out war with Romalia.

This is a very unfavorable gamble. However, presently Henrietta just wants to get the bargaining chips to stop the "Holy War".

But who should this task be given to... This is the biggest problem.

In this place, it's just like Henrietta has no command authority.

Tristain's main forces have already been incorporated into the "Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands". At present, the troops that Henrietta could mobilize are the Musketeers of her personal guard. But in the end, they're a bodyguard team composed of commoners who can't be sent to an elf prison.

"How can I make this work...?"

Biting her lip, Henrietta became lost in thought.

“Château d’If” has the meaning of “Prison Island” in the language of Gaulia.

It was located in the sea near the city of “Eumenes” where humans and elves interact, and the island is about two leagues in diameter. It was named the sea prison.

Only criminals which had committed major crimes, such as Elves that committed treason against their people, would be sent here. The members of the “Steel-Blooded Party” headed by Aishmail also were on the island.

This island was a place that has been abandoned by the “Great Will” of the Elven faith, almost completely blocking the power of Elves. After all, Elves still could use Firstborn Magic, unlike a barbarian mage that would be useless without a wand. Only the stone-built cells themselves, and the guards which had established a contract, could use the power of the Elves. Once they were locked into this impregnable fortress, even Elves couldn’t escape... that was the kind of place that Saito had been locked into.

The facilities in the cell actually weren’t bad.

There was a bed, chair and desk, as well as a regular toilet. Beside the lack of a window totally ruining the scene, it was comparable to a high quality hotel room.

But it doesn’t matter how you hit the door, it was made of solid metal. Blocking out all the light from the outside world,

only a small magic device on the wall illuminated the room.

“Damn, this isn’t it either...”

Saito, with blood-shot eyes, desperately searched for a secret passage. In the end he finally gave up, and sat in his original spot.

Anyway, even if he escaped from this cell, he would only get arrested by the Elven guard. Even Derflinger was taken away by those guys from Romalia...

“... In other words, this is the third time I’ve been locked in prison.”

Saito sighed in his heart. You could say he’s getting used to this occurrence, but in Tokyo he was just a normal high school student, he didn’t have the experience of receiving counseling. He always feels a little sad that he’s used to being jailed.

“Hey, what should I do? Is there anything we can do?”

Saito, with his hands on his chest, spoke to another prisoner sitting under the light.

“Wait for rescue, this is the best we can do.”

Tabitha, reading a book, only slightly lifted her head to respond.

Yes, somehow Tabitha too was imprisoned with Saito on that same Prison Island. He heard that after he lost consciousness, she tried to save him when he was caught, and got in a big fight with the Templar Knights on the ship.

“You’re truly amazing... you can even read a book in a place like this.”

“I’m used to this kind of situation.”

Tabitha’s response was very dull.

“What book are you reading?”

“The Holy Scriptures of Brimir.”

“Is it interesting?”

Tabitha shook her head.

Thinking about it and you’d know that it’s boring, thought Saito.

After all, not only her wand, but all of her books were confiscated. The only one allowed to be brought into the cell was the Scriptures of Brimir. Even if it’s boring, maybe reading can make her feel relaxed...”

“Sorry, because you were associated with me...”

At that moment Saito apologized.

“This isn’t your fault.”

Tabitha’s reaction was to shake her head again.

“I just wanted to do this myself.”

When he heard this, Saito suddenly remembered.

Say, Tabitha... you didn’t get caught deliberately, did you?”

“ ...”

Tabitha nodded her head in response when Saito ask this question.

“Nonono, why? You would never be arrested, Tabitha, right.”

“I am your servant, I’m obligated to be by your side to protect you.”

Tabitha didn’t meet his eyes, and her tone was a little rushed.

“Tabitha...”

That warmed Saito’s heart.

“Thank you.”

Hearing Saito’s thanks, Tabitha blushed, and returned her eyes to her book.

“Okay, anyway, I still need to think about my future plans...”

Saito, with his hands still on his chest, looked up at the ceiling.

First to grasp the current situation.

In short, since they've been given to this place, it means that Romalia has no plans to kill Saito. It's no wonder... thought Saito. After all, Saito is the "Magic Power Supply" for the "Final Void" that Louise casts. Locking his together with Tabitha was mostly to prevent him from committing suicide.

Julio definitely came up with this plan.

However, even if Saito was dead, it would only slightly delay the timetable for the invasion of Earth. The Pope would definitely find a new bearer and familiar, and continue his crazy plan.

"So, I can't die yet..."

Then, Saito thought about Louise.

"What is she doing now...?"

"Sorry, Saito..."

At that time, what exactly is the meaning of the tears left by Louise...?

Previously Louise opposed the Pope's plan to conquer the Earth. Even if it's to save Halkeginia, this is the wrong

method... she said this herself.

But how did her words suddenly change.

Don't tell me she's being manipulated by the Pope, or threatened somehow...

In any case, Saito didn't think that was Louise's true heart.

She's definitely hiding something. When she tried to send my back to Earth, didn't she cry like she was suffering terribly...?

"Louise... I really want to see you, Louise... Louise..."

Saito repeatedly called the name of his lover in his heart.

I want to see Louise and look at her. I was to touch her, and hug her, and kiss her. It's hard to be reunited, but it's also too uncomfortable to be separated.

Thinking of Louise in his heart, tears unconsciously flowed. Worried that Tabitha saw, Saito quickly blinked his eyes and laid in bed.

He still couldn't give up.

In order to be ready for the moment, he needed to save his energy now.

When his eyes opened again, he didn't know if his body could move freely.

But before he reunites with Louise, he absolutely can't die...

Saito mumbled as he stared at the ceiling.

"I will never give up..."

At the same time... In the mess hall aboard the "Ostland", Guiche and the other Water Spirit Knights were engaged in a fierce argument. Hearing that Saito, the vice-captain, had been transferred to an Elven prison, everyone was at their wits end.

"Please, this is a big deal. What should we do about this?"

"Of course, let's go save the vice-captain!"

Gimli excitedly clenched his fist and shouted irresponsibly.

"Wait, wait, wait, wait a minute, you all should calm down a bit."

Guiche quickly said.

"What, Guiche. Don't you want to save Saito?"

"That isn't what I mean, I mean, this isn't a problem that we can handle."

Guiche, looking like he has a headache, shrugged his shoulders.

“It doesn’t matter the reason, Saito has caused trouble on the Romalian ship. In other words, they definitely have justification to imprison Saito.”

“Oh... that’s right, but like that, Saito is too pitiful.”

He listened to Gimli’s dissatisfied complaints.

And Guiche awkwardly shook his head.

After all, Guiche also really wanted to save Saito himself, and Saito wouldn’t cause trouble without reason. So there must be some reason, thought Guiche.

But Guiche certainly had experience on exactly how terrifying Elves were. Although everyone here was motivated, they were all only dot mages. If they were to go to the Elven prison, there definitely would be no way to escape. As the captain, he couldn’t let his squad mates face this kind of danger.

“Chirp chirp what are you talking about, please hurry and go save big sister!”

Sylphid, who had changed into human form, shouted. Under Tabitha’s order, she returned to the “Ostland” and sought the assistance of the Water Spirit Knights.

“If you save big sister, Sylphid will dance the inherited dance of gratitude of the ‘Rhyme Dragons’.”

“Hey, don’t strip!”

The red-faced teenagers quickly stopped Sylphid.

“We also want to save them, but this time there is really no way.”

Guiche said helplessly.

“Chirp chirp, what the hell are you doing, usually you like to act as nobles, but you’re useless at this critical moment, chirp!”

“What did you say, are you insulting the reputation of the nobility?”

“Stop quarreling.”

Reynald said with a serious face.

“You didn’t say that Saito will be punished? Then again, Saito is the hero of Halkeginia. Don’t worry, he’ll be released in a few days.”

“Probably.”

Malicorne responded.

“In other words, we can do what now...?”

“Right.”

“Just prepare a welcome party, and wait for Saito to come back safely.”

“Oh, that’s right!”

“Chirp chirp! You’re all idiots! If I knew this earlier, I wouldn’t have asked you for help!”

After Sylphid shouted, she immediately fled from the mess hall.

Among them, Reynald said with a sigh.

“Everyone is really laid back. If what Saito said is true, war will break out soon.

“...”

This sentence suddenly silenced everyone.

That’s right, all the members of the Water Spirit Knight Corps on the scene had witnessed up close the power of the “Weapons” from Saito’s world like the “Tiger Tank” and the “Zero Fighter”. And according to what Saito said, the world on the other side had even higher performance “Weapons”.

“What kind of situation will we face?”

Malicorne muttered.

“Louise also hasn’t returned.”

“Yeah, speaking about coming back.”

“Speaking of it, the Elf with the big tits also hasn’t returned.”

The members of the Water Spirit Knight Corps coincidentally revealed an uneasy expression as they looked at each other.

Just as the mess hall fell into silence.

“Everyone, excuse me...”

Suddenly, a woman wearing a gray cloak appeared.

Everyone was suddenly shocked and immediately pulled out their wands. Even though they were only dot mages, they were still teenagers with a lot of experience.

“Who is it?”

Pointing his wand at the opponent, Guiche sharply asked. It possibly is a Romalian.

“Ah, this is, I am...”

“What, this is very suspicious.”

Malicorne, licking the tip of this wand, approached the woman’s side.

“Maybe it’s a spy, let me investigate.”

Just when Malicorne was about to put his wand into her skirt,

“Ha-hands off, you have no manners!”

The woman awarded Malicorne the palm of her hand.

“What, actually resisting, more and more suspicious!”

Somehow, Malicorne excited moved their faces together.

“Squeak!”^[1]

The woman screamed and backed up a few steps, and her cloak opened with the movement.

“What?”

At that moment, the face of everyone in the mess hall turned blue.

“Your Majesty, Queen Henrietta!”

“Ju-ju-just now, to Her Majesty, the Queen, tru-truly to-too discourteous...”

Guiche’s voice constantly trembled as he desperately bowed.

From the captain down, every member of the Water Spirit Knight Corps was in a Japanese-style kneeling posture. Of course, Halkeginia didn’t have this method of kneeling to

apologize, but because every time Saito apologized to Louise he made this action, everyone imitated it. Everyone must believe that the aristocratic etiquette they learned wasn't enough to express their self-reflection to the Queen.

But only Malicorne was tied up with a rope and fell to the ground.



Ple-please, mercy Your Majesty, do-don't cut off the villain's head...!"

Guiche's forehead constantly knocked on the floor. He obviously was a nobleman, but what he was doing was a standard kneeling action.^[2]

"God, did I really, I really didn't recognize her voice..."

His error made Guiche feel embarrassed. It was no wonder that her voice sounded familiar, but he never would imagine that Her Majesty would appear at that time, without anyone accompanying her. Guiche wasn't a god, so of course there's no way he could imagine it.

But that was a serious gaffe, so there was nothing to say even if the sentence was capital punishment. After all, this was lèse-majesté to the Queen; it could just stop at capital punishment, but if there was one little mistake, it could be the entire Gramont family that's destroyed. With a "God, will the Gramont family be ruined by my hands...", Guiche even knelt to his parents and brothers in his heart.

"Your Majesty, my errors are mine alone! Please punish me!"

At this time, Malicorne, who had fallen on the ground, desperately shouted in order to protect his squad mates.

"Malicorne..."

I-I'm already aware, and willing to ac-accept any punishment! Your Majesty, ple-please severely punish this stupid pig! Ple-please step on me—!

“You shut up!”

Reynald cast “Silence” on Malicorne, and shut him up.

“This, everyone, please raise your heads.”

Henrietta revealed a few incomprehensible expressions as she spoke.

The young team members slightly lifted their heads at her instruction.

“I apologize for visiting suddenly. I will not investigate the matter of just now.”

Seeing Henrietta shaking her head, Guiche and the others looked at each other with stunned faces.

“Won't investigate, really?”

“Yes, there's absolutely nothing to say.”

“We ob-obey—tr-truly thank you very much for your tolerance, Your Majesty...”

Towards Henrietta's magnanimity, the squad once again bowed their heads repeated.

But only Malicorne, unknowingly felt a little regret...

“I am very sorry to scare everyone. In order to outwit Romalia, it is necessary to act in secret.”

Henrietta lowered her voice.

This confused Guiche and the others, and they looked at each other.

“Please explain what you mean by this?”

“In fact, I have something to ask of you all.”

At that moment, the eyes of every member of the Water Spirit Knight Corps widened.

Because they saw Henrietta deeply bow her head in front of them all.

In front of the members of the Water Spirit Knight Corps, Henrietta stated her plan.

“Once the “Holy War” that the Pope advocates starts, blood will surely flow like a river. As the Queen of Tristain, we have to avoid this issue from happening, no matter what.

However, the Pope clings to the mission of the Founder, Brimir, and can’t be convinced to change his mind...

Therefore, the last resort is to take Saito into custody, not let the “Four of Four” gather, and perhaps have the chance to stop the Pope’s plan...”, Henrietta said.

“In other words, Your Majesty wants us to save Saito.”, said Guiche.

“Yes, you are correct. Please help me, everyone. Currently in this place, I can only rely on you guards.”

Everyone in the Water Spirit Knight Corps faced each other.

Even those who were clamoring to go to the prison and rescue Saito were all hesitant, when facing an actual jailbreak. Although they had become familiar with them thanks to Tiffania, but the word “Elf” still was an indelible symbol of terror.

Silence reigned over the entire mess hall.

After a bit...

“Sorry, Your Majesty.”

At that time, Guiche spoke with a serious expression.

All of the squad was scared, and they perked up their ears to listen to what the frivolous Guiche wanted to say.

“We are all nobles of Tristain, and won’t hesitate to gamble our lives on any order from Your Majesty. But, this... is a little rude, on this matter I want to trouble Your Majesty for a promise.”

“What is it? Please do speak, whatever it is.”

“I wish to only send volunteers to rescue Saito. And hope that Your Majesty won’t punish the team members who are not willing to participate in this operation.”

Guiche’s words made the team feel relieved. With an upright attitude, it seemed totally like he wasn’t just desperately bowing his head a moment ago.

“Of course, I swear by my name, and promise you.”

Henrietta responded without hesitation.

“This is not an order from the Queen of Tristain, but a personal request from Henrietta de Tristain.”

“Thank you very much for answering your subordinate’s request, Your Majesty.”

After a quick salute, Guiche pulled out his wand wrapped in roses and lifted it up high.

“The captain of the Water Spirit Knight Corps, Guiche de Gramont, will sincerely follow your holy command.”

That was a standard aristocratic ritual to declare loyalty to the royal family.

The team members pulled out their wands one after another, and also lifted them up high.

“Oh, we can’t let the captain go by himself.”

“Yeah, you’re right.”

“It really is a headache. After all the captain is the one that is the most scared.”

They didn’t know who said this, but the squad mates laughed when they heard it.

Because as Guiche was holding his wand up, both his legs were trembling slightly.

“I’m trembling with excitement, you lot.”

Guiche put on a strong front.

“That’s right, I’m trembling with excitement.”

Even Gimli’s legs are shaking.

“Saito has saved our motherland numerous times before. If it wasn’t for Saito blocking that army of 70,000, we’d all be dead.”

Reynald said.

“Yeah, you’re right.”

Malicorne nodded his head.

“I don’t want to die in the “Holy War”. But if it’s to save a friend, then I won’t hesitate.”

Everyone raised their wand, and no one withdrew.

The teenagers brought their wands together, and chanted “Long live Tristain”.

Henrietta, who resisted her tears, deeply bowed in thanks to the brave teenagers.

“Right, how do we get to the ‘Prison Island’^[3]?”

At that time, Guiche spoke.

“I have prepared a small, high-speed boat. Everyone, please take that boat and go.”

Just when Henrietta was answering,

“I don’t recommend this method.”

“Teacher!”

Guiche shouted. At the entrance to the mess hall was Colbert, Kirche, and Sylphid. Sylphid, who was mad at Guiche and the others, ran to bring Colbert back.

“Sorry, I heard all the details. If a vessel of the Tristain army is mobilized, Romalia will be aware of the movement.

“Colbert-dono, what should we do...?”

“Nothing, don’t worry. With the speed of the ‘Ostland’, even if they are aware of our movements, we can lose their pursuit.”

Colbert said proudly.

“Oh, then...”

“Ms. Zerbst and I will go along. Hey, the academy’s instructors are obliged to lead their students.”

“If we leave it to you guys, you’ll definitely brainlessly charge into the prison.”

Looking around at the youth of the Water Spirit Knight Corps, Kirche shrugged.

“I truly am grateful.”

After paying respect to Colbert and the others, Henrietta spoke with a resolute attitude.

“Be sure to keep a low profile, and quietly complete your mission. I wish you all good fortune.”

NOTES

1. ↑ Onomatopoeia, not the actual word.
2. ↑ This refers to the glorious Japanese invention of dogeza. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dogeza>)
3. ↑ Furigana here is Château d’If.

CHAPTER 7:

A WAVERING HEART

Tiffania was deeply dismayed in the VIP room prepared for her aboard the flagship of the Romalian fleet, “St. Mark”. In order to take care of the injured Fatima, when she arrived on the Romalian ship, she was immediately surrounded, and half-forced by the Templars into here.

Of course, even if Tiffania was on the “Ostland”, she can only surrender as long as the other party held Fatima as a hostage.

The room assigned to Tiffania is fully furnish, and quite stylish. But they confiscated her wand to prevent Tiffania from using magic. She couldn’t leave the room without permission, which was essentially house arrest.

“What should I do now?”

Sitting on the bed, Tiffania stared at the ring on her right hand that was left to her by her mother. The stone previously set on the ring was the Spirit Stone of Water, and now only the setting is left. Previously, she used up the

Spirit Stone of Water, in order to treat Saito's life threatening wounds.

An unspeakable uneasy had lingered in her heart for a long time.

A war could break out with Saito's world... and as a bearer of the void, she could become an accomplice.

"Do I have to do such a terrible thing...?"

Tiffania tightly clasped her hands.

Let the "Four of Four" chant the "The Founder's Void". Once chanted, Saito's world would be littered with corpses.

However, if they didn't do this, the "Wind Stones" going out of control would lead to the deaths of many Halkeginian people. Like the Pope's warning, mankind and Elves would fight bloody war after bloody war in order to fight for the remaining land.

At that time, the first sacrifice would be the orphans, like those that Tiffania took care of, those who are weak.

"Saito, I... what should I do?"

With her eyes close, Tiffania quietly prayed.

Just saying his name, she felt gut-wrenching pain.

Whenever, without regard for the threat to his own life, he sacrificed himself to save me. Even when I had lost my

home, when I simply wanted to die, he would willingly become my home.

Originally I had already given up on it, but he was my first love. But I absolutely cannot love him. Because Saito already has a lover he treasures, and that lover is also Tiffania's most important friend. The two have concluded that they can't allow a third person to intervene, and their link's strength is unmatched.

After falling in love, was the first time I understood my mother's feelings.

Presumably, mama had long known. Exactly how sinful it is for an Elf to fall in love with a human... but mother still fell in love with a human.

I want to see Saito... but Saito is now a prisoner of the Romalian army, and is locked away in a distant Elven prison...

"Saito..."

As Tiffania was staring off in the distance, and whispered uneasily... the sound of a knock came from the door.

"...Who is it?"

"It's me, Tiffa."

"Louise?"

Tiffania immediately stood up, and walked to the door.

Opening the door, she saw Louise with a depressed and frustrated expression.

“Oh, Louise... I was worried about you.”

“I’m fine. You haven’t been treated roughly by them, have you Tiffa?”

“No.”

The two immediately hugged each other.

“Louise, what should we do now? We can’t go back to everybody, and even Saito has been captured...”

Tiffania spoke in this way,

“...Don’t worry.”

Louise shook her head slightly, and decisively said.

“Soon, everything will be over.”

“What?”

Louise’s tone made Tiffania feel a little wrong

...Over? What exactly will be over?”

While Tiffania was feeling surprised... Louise’s expression seemed like she’d come to some kind of decision and said.

“This, Tiffa... I have one thing, I want to ask you.”

“...ask?”

“Yes.”

After nodding her head, Louise said.

“I hope that you can use your magic again, and eliminate the memory of Saito from my mind.”

“...What did you say?”

This request rendered Tiffania speechless.

“What is going on, Louise, Why do you want to say this!”

Tiffania, who rarely showed strong emotion, grabbed Louise’s shoulders. It was hard to believe that Louise would say this.

“...It doesn’t matter.”

“What?”

“I want to forget everything about Saito. Because... because there’s no way that I can face Saito again, so...”

Louise’s voice trembled with her eyes full of tears.

“Please Louise, calm down, what is going on?”

In the past, Louise was forced to ask Tiffania to eliminate the memories related to Saito. At the time, it was to escape from the sorrow of being separated from Saito. However, the Louise that lost the memories of Saito, simply became a different person.

Now she unexpectedly made the same request to eliminate memories.

This is definitely a very difficult matter, thought Tiffania.

“Otherwise, how could Louise ask this...?”

Wiping tears from her eyes, Louise said.

“I decided. In order to save Halkeginia, I will become a ‘Saint’.”

Hearing this, Tiffania suddenly paled.

“Louise, you mean... to destroy Saito’s world?”

“Yes, in order to save everyone... to save this world, this is the only way.”

Nodding her head, Louise’s voice carried a tragic determination.

“...Why!?”

Hearing this, Tiffania was speechless, and at the same time understood that what Louise said was true. And she was

troubled by that for a long time, suffered and suffered... and had finally arrived at this answer.

“Is this really okay, Louise? If you do this, Saito will...”

Even if the two are in love... No, exactly because they are lovers, there will definitely be no way to forgive the lover who destroyed their homeland.

“Yes, from now on I will never be able to meet Saito and show him my smiling face. However, I can’t bear it all. Even now, my determination is constantly shaking... So in order to save the world, I hope that you can eliminate the memories of Saito.”

“Louise...”

Louise’s sorrowful determination deeply touched Tiffania. Even from now on, she will never see Saito’s face... She still wants to save Halkeginia?”

“No, not like this Louise! If you do this, you won’t be saved!”

Tiffania desperately shook her head.

“You are very considerate Tiffa. But I don’t care anymore, really...”

“Please Louise, rethink this! There must be, there has to be another way!”

“No there is none... I’ve desperately thought about it, but there’s no way to save my most important person without sacrificing anybody.”

Overflowing tears dripped off of Louise’s chin.

That made Tiffania feel overwhelmed.

It seemed like Louise had made up her mind. No matter what she were to say, there definitely would be no way to change her opinion...

Troubled to the end... Tiffania slowly raised her head.

“I’m sorry, Louise. I can’t agree to your request.”

Then she resolutely decided and shook her head.

“Why...”

“Louise becoming unlike Louise is too sad, and I don’t want to repeat the same mistake. And...”

Saying this, Tiffania tenderly embraced Louise’s shoulders.

“Even if you use ‘Void’ magic, there’s no way to eliminate your thoughts about Saito, right?”

Tiffania’s word made Louise’s eyes open wide in shock.

“Um...ye-yes...”

Saying this, Louise bit her lip.

“Sorry for the unreasonable request. I’m sorry, Tiffa.”

After wiping the tears from her eyes, Louise bowed her head, and immediately walked away.

“Wait a moment, Louise...”

Just when Tiffania was about to pursue her,

“Don’t move, you can’t go.”

The guards in the hallway blocked her.

In desperation, Tiffania could only stare at the gradually departing back of Louise.

Just after Louise left... Tiffania idled about for a while

Numerous thoughts were stirring in her mind, and her mind was in chaos.

Unexpectedly, Louise wanted to destroy Saito’s homeland...

To save Halkeginia on the verge of crisis, perhaps that was the only way.

However, it was reasonable to say that Louise originally opposed Halkeginia seizing the land of the Elves.

What was she really doing...?

It couldn’t be that she was brainwashed by some magic or medicine, to obediently follow Romalia?

However, from her current appearance, the likelihood of that was negligible. If she was truly brainwashed, it would be impossible for Louise to ask her to “eliminate my memories of Saito”.

“Louise’s heart is very tormented...”

Thinking of Louise’s tragic expression, Tiffania’s heart didn’t feel well.

After quietly closing her eyes, Tiffania thought.

What exactly can I do for Louise...?

At this time, if it was Saito, what would he do...?

Right, if it’s Saito... maybe he can persuade Louise. No, the only person who is able to persuade Louise now is Saito.

However... Saito is currently locked up in a distant Elven prison.

The Pope must be deliberately separating these two...

“There’s no way to ask Saito now...”

Just as Tiffania’s long ears hung down in depression.

“Ms. Westwood, I’ve brought new sheets and a meal.”

The voice of a maid came from outside the door, interrupting Tiffania’s thinking.

Opening the door, she saw an elderly woman enter the room holding sheets.

“Thank you, but it doesn’t matter, you don’t need to look after me.”

“We can’t do that, you’re the honorable guest of the Pope.”

The maid leaned close to Tiffania’s face.

“...?”

As this movement cause Tiffania to furrow her brow,

“It’s me Tiffania.”

Tiffania saw the appearance of the maid disappear like it melted, and another face was revealed underneath.

“Matilda-nee?”

Tiffania shouted in surprise. It turned out that the maid was Matilda, the one she looked up to as her big sister.

“How did you get her?”

Tiffania ask, with her eyes wide open.

“Really, how could you say this? I heard that you were taken to a Romalian ship, and I came because I was worried about your safety.”

Matilda... Fouquet “The Crumbling Earth” shrugged.

“Ah, Matilda-nee...”

Tiffania, who tightly clung to Matilda, couldn't help but shed tears.

Before her nerves were really tense, then meeting someone she truly trusted, all the tension relaxed in a moment.

Tenderly stroking Tiffania's head, Fouquet said.

“Although I really want to take you away from here immediately, but after all, we're on the sea. And we're surrounded by the Romalian fleet... As strong as I am, I need to prepare a little, so let's be patient.”

“Well, I have no issue...”

Having said that, Tiffania suddenly had a thought flash in her mind.

...Escape from here?

“What's wrong?”

“This, Matilda-nee... I have something I want to ask you.”

Fouquet frowned in surprise.

“What's up? It's rare for you to actually take the initiative and ask me something.”

Returning to the room arranged for by Romalia, Louise directly plopped onto the bed.

She buried her face in the pillow and held it tightly.

Thinking about her embarrassment and stupidity, she felt her cheeks get hot.

What Tiffa said was right. Even if I use Void magic, I can't forget Saito...

In the end, she just wanted to escape. In order to alleviate some of the guilty feelings of destroying Saito's world... she could only rely on Tiffania's magic.

I truly am a coward... Louise laughed at herself in her heart.

"I will have to bear this sin for the rest of my life..."

Staring at the "Water Ruby" set on her hand.

Thinking of the terrible action she was about to take, Louise's chest appeared to ache from despair.

"Saito, what should I do...?"

In fact, right now she wanted to immediately fly to the arms of her lover.

Admit everything to Saito, commit everything of hers to Saito.

But she can't do it herself. If Louise were to tell the truth, Saito will most likely choose self-sacrifice first.

"Why... why me?"

Louise sobbed, with her head buried in her pillow.

Why was I chosen to be a "Bearer of the Void"...?

I don't need any legendary power at all, I just want to awaken to the normal four-system magic. Like mom's wind system, or dad's water system... no, it doesn't matter if I don't use magic. No matter how despised I am by others, I just want to continue to be Louise the "Zero".

"Founder, why did you give me this power...?"

After sobbing in the pillow for a while... the sound of the door opening came.

"Ms. Vallière, I brought you a change of clothes."

Siesta opened the door herself, and walked in.

Unexpectedly, Siesta actually brought baggage, and approached the Romalian fleet by boat. Then she declared that she was Ms. Vallière's maid. While arguing with the Romalian soldiers, Louise, who was passing by, discovered and protected her. Regarding the enigmatic actions that Siesta took from time to time, Louise was amazed, yet steamrolled over by her.



“Ex-excuse me, how do you just walk in without permission.”

Louise couldn't help but complain as she got up from the bed, but Siesta didn't hesitate to walk into the room, and hand off the pajamas to Louise.

“It's miserable to cry, Ms. Vallière. It truly ruins your cute looks.”

“Le-leave me alone.”

Louise promptly rubbed her eyes.

“How long will you stay here? It's almost time for you to return to Mr. Colbert's side.”

“Never. I want to stay next to Ms. Vallière.”

Siesta said decisively.

“I just told you to go back soon.”

“Ne-ver.”

“Really, why!?”

Once Siesta had shown that attitude, she would definitely not move. Louise, who knew that, sighed and raised her hands in surrender.

With a smile showing on Siesta's face, she sat down next to Louise to help her.

"Ms. Vallière, why are you crying?"

"Wh-what crying, you're talking nonsense..."

"Don't be reluctant. Come on, or you'll be laughed at by Saito."

Just as Siesta took out a handkerchief to wipe Louise's face, tears suddenly flowed from Louise's eyes.

"Wa-waaah..."

"Wha, wh-what is it, Ms. Vallière!?"

Upon hearing Saito's name, the originally suppressed feelings burst out again.

The miserable Louise broke down in tears.

"Don't, don't cry now... come on."

Siesta caressed Louise's back. But Louise's crying didn't stop, and it got louder and louder.

This made Siesta feel overwhelmed.

"Wh-what should I do... seeing Ms. Vallière cry, always makes me feel sad."

Not knowing why, even Siesta started to cry.

Just like this, the two of them cried until they were too tired to make a sound.

Waiting until when Louise finally stopped crying...

Siesta, who didn't ask a thing, said, "I'll come again," and left the room. Possibly waiting for Louise to take the initiative, her consideration was sweet.

But Louise didn't intend to tell anybody.

Whether it was Siesta, Tiffania, or even Henrietta...

"This pain must be borne by me alone..."

Standing up shakily, Louise took the Founder's Prayer Book from her cape.

Then, with a quivering hand, turned the pages of the prayer book.

The "Water Ruby" on her finger responded and a page was slightly illuminated.

That was a new page that was revealed with the help of the Pope.

Louise read the page repeatedly, and confirmed it over and over...

This record lists the three qualms... of the final familiar, "Lífprásir". Because of its doomed fate, it had to give its life

to complete the “Final Void”. Apostles, if you desire to break that doomed fate, you must strive to recover the “Holy Land” captured by the infidels. For the sake of the your Magi comrades’ incomplete ambitions, destroy the “Varyag” that are hostile to the gods. In this way, the “Void” will lose power and free the familiar from its fate...

That right, if it were to go like that, the power of the “Lífþrasir” would take the life of Saito.

Even if Louise insisted on not chanting “Void” magic, Saito would also be killed.

However, as long as the Founder’s wish of recovering the “Holy Lands” is achieved... the “Void” would lose power and the familiar runes will be destroyed.

Recovering the “Holy Lands”, was the only way to save Saito from death.

To save Halkeginia, was actually a lie.

The truth was that in order to save Saito’s life, she had to launch the “Void”.

Louise understood why the Pope was calm.

Because the Pope already knew that.

He also knew that Louise couldn’t do anything to save Saito.

Moreover, he knew that Louise would promise to recover the “Holy Lands” in order to save Saito’s life...

CHAPTER 8:

THE RESCUE MISSION

The next day after Saito was transferred to “Prison Island”.

The third day of the third week of the ninth month. After the main army of the “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands”, lead by Emperor of Germania, Albrecht III, combined with Romalian fleet, they set camp in the broad desert on the outskirts of the Elven capital “Adyl”.

Their total strength exceeded 300,000 soldiers. Among the “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands” expeditions to the country of the Elves, this was the largest.

However, at the current time, besides the Romalian soldiers, the morale of the army had already been significantly lowered. Achieving a peace agreement with the enemy Elves, and the Pope’s new commandment issued by the Office of Religious Affairs greatly confused the soldiers and lords.

With the power of the “Void” granted by Founder, the true “Holy Lands” outside of this world would be recovered... even if that news suddenly were to be known, there would

be almost no way that the people of Halkeginia would understand it. What kind of enemy were they ultimately going to face... because of that unknown mess, uneasiness and confusion spread through the army.

During that moment, a young man walked into the sunshade of the one, Albrecht III, who gathered this 300,000-man army. It was a beautiful boy with heterochromatic eyes, Julio.

"I am Julio Caesar. I have come as an agent for his Holiness, the Pope.

Upon entering the sunshade, Julio immediately saluted gracefully.

"Hey, it's the bluffing priest. The heat of this ghost town could kill a man."

With a look of displeasure, Albrecht III glared at Julio.

"The Elven capital is right in front of our eyes, and the soldiers are all unstable. If it goes on like this, sooner or later it will be irrepressible."

Although they had reached a peace agreement, the aversion and fear of Elves was deeply rooted in the people of Halkeginia. There were still many lords who opposed the peace. Not to mention, a majority of the believers were originally unwilling to follow the rising country, Germania's, name.

“Joining hands with the Elves, well, I guess it’s fine. However, I truly cannot believe those absurd words about invading a ‘Different World’. Even among the lords, some people say that it is slander against his Holiness, the Pope, through their furious piety.”

These ravings were extremely disrespectful to the Pope, who guided all of the followers of Brimir. Someone that careless, even a member of a royal family, would surely be punished. However, the Germanian Emperor deserved to be called a courageous person.

“It’s no wonder that you can’t believe it. However, what his Holiness said is true.”

“I certainly hope it’s true. It doesn’t matter, even if it’s a ridiculous lie, it’s an entirely different thing as long as you get the land. If, after defeating the Elves, we get a desert that isn’t worth developing, and the worthless honor of achieving the Founder Brimir’s mission; how are these sorts of things going to fill a soldier’s belly?”

“Well, what Your Excellency says is correct.”

Julio laughed when he heard an extremely blatant choking sound.

“But please rest assured, Your Excellency. The promised land that we conquer is far greater than Halkeginia, as well as

rich and fertile. Your Excellency and the Germanian nobility will certainly be satisfied once you see the land.”

“It is the ‘Land of milk and honey’ as recorded in ‘The Book of St. Aegis’. It indeed may be a little better than this desolate desert, but...”

After a bit, Albrecht the Third opened his mouth.

“This ‘Holy Land’ isn’t at the bottom of the sea? How exactly do you send an army of 300,000 there?”

“His Holiness has a plan, so please wait for a little longer, Your Excellency.”

“Oh, and where is his Holiness at the moment?”

“In order to collect the mental power needed to open the ‘Door’, His Holiness is currently praying without stop. However, by tomorrow morning, everything will be ready.”

“Very good, then I will convince the nobility.”

Standing up from his chair, Albrecht the Third walked out of the sunshade.

“The land is on the verge of upheaval, Void magic is reviving, and we’re about to return to the Founder’s homeland... it’s unbelievable. We’re all living in the age of legends.”

The sun hadn't sunk under the horizon, and the twin moons hung high in the sky...

"The Saito Rescue Force", formed at the request of Henrietta, secretly prepared for action on the "Ostland".

"Are you ready, Ms. Zerbst?"

Leaving the ship's engine room, Colbert asked, with a face covered in soot.

"No problem, they're still unaware. We'll raid the Elven prison while those Romalian guys are dreaming and not expecting it."

"Well, you're speaking the truth."

"Hey, oi, your head is all covered in soot."

Kirche, with a wry smile, blew at Colbert's head.

At this time, there was a roar in the direction of the deck.

"Nasty, explode you pig! Why don't you piss off, you little pig!"

"Ah, nee-san, if you step on me like this, I, I won't be able to take it!"

“Go, die for me once, piglet!”

“Ah, sorry, I’m sorry I was born a pig!”

The one cursing was Louise’s older sister, Éléonore. She advanced with a grim expression towards Malicorne, who was screaming happily as he was kicked to the side of the ship.

Seeing her murderous expression, even Colbert, a squadron commander who’d faced many battles, couldn’t help but gasp.

“Um, Ms. Éléonore...”

Colbert carefully opened his mouth.

“What is it?”

“So, are you alright?”

Hearing Colbert’s question, Éléonore snorted and looked away.

“As I too am a noble of Tristain, how come I wasn’t entrusted this by Her Majesty the Queen? What’s more, I’m also very uncomfortable with my sister being at someone else’s mercy. If I see my sister reduced to a tool of war, I won’t be able to face my parents and family.”

Although she spoke awkwardly, Éléonore still was worried about Louise’s safety.

After that, the members of the “Saito Rescue Force”, headed by the Knights of the Water Spirit, gathered in the mess hall of the “Ostland” to hold a strategy meeting.

Of course, the commander was Colbert.

“Although this is combat, little tricks are completely useless against the Elves.”

Colbert said as he rubbed his bright, bald head.

“So, do you still have the courage to gamble?”

Éléonore sighed as she rubbed her temple.

“Right, there’s no other way to fight besides the one that has succeeded before.”

“That fight...?”

Guiche looked to the sky and sighed. When one said “that battle”, there was only one answer. It was the same method Colbert used when he broke into the tower of the Elves.

“Yes, but in the current situation there is no more effective method.”

“Right.”

Hearing Kirche say this, Guiche shrugged in resignation.

“After charging the prison, the diversion and search & rescue force will separate into two routes. Ms. Zerbst and I will be responsible for the diversionary force, and the search & rescue teams top priority is finding Saito and Ms. Tabitha. Even if you encounter an Elf, never fight. Understood?”

“Is it really alright to just rely on Kirche and Sensei?”

“Yeah. You will need find those two as soon as possible. That way we’ll have a chance to escape.”

Colbert’s tone had never been this serious.

Hearing Colbert’s calm realization, Guiche and his team corrected their posture.

“If it’s a diversion, I can help.”

A loud female voice rang in the chow hall.

Everyone suddenly reached for their wands and looked at the entrance of the chow hall.

“You are...”

Kirche’s mouth dumbly hung open.

Standing there was “The Crumbling Dirt”, Fouquet.

Colbert grumbled. When did she get there? Although he was paying attention to the students, not even he could sense her presence. The skills of that thief was truly terrifying. Of

course, Fouquet previously had pretended to be a secretary at the Academy, and made Colbert suffer a major defeat.

Kirche sharply said, as she continued to point her wand at Fouquet.

“What are you doing, Ms. Thief?”

“Don’t be so alarmed, I’m not working for Romalia.”

Fouquet grinned.

“I just want to provide you a little help.”

“Help? You?”

“Right. I know you probably won’t believe empty words, so I brought a handful of gifts.”

After taking out the bag at her waist, Fouquet whispered an incantation.

The bag immediately opened wide and a large number of weapons poured out. It turned out to be a magic bag that could be freely resized.

Scattered all over the place were weapons that had never been seen in Halkeginia before, including grenades, automatic rifles, rocket launchers, and others.

These are weapons from the “Holy Land” that were recovered along with the “Nuclear Submarine”. The exterior

was covered in rust, but the inside was waterproofed so they could be used.

Among them, Kirche found familiar weapons.

“This is Tabitha’s staff!”

“Oh, and this is Saito’s sword.”

Guiche picked up Derflinger, buried in the mountain of weapons.

“I slipped into the Romalian storehouse and laid my hands on a few things. So with this, can you trust me?”

With eyes full of suspicion, Kirche looked at Fouquet.

“Why are you helping us?”

“Because someone begged me. To save that boy, you see.”

Fouquet answered.

“Begged you to save Saito? Who?”

“Who doesn’t matter. More important, what do you say? If you don’t care, I won’t help you.”

Everyone looked at each other. That combat power is sizeable, but it being Fouquet, can we believe her...?

After a moment of silence, Kirche sighed.

“Understood. We’ll believe you, for now.”

“Well, any and all combat power is needed right now.”

Colbert also nodded. Since those two said so, the members of the Knight Corps of the Water Spirit also agreed.

“But even for me, this’ll be the first time to sneak into an Elven prison.

Then, late at night...

The “Ostland” took off in the dark and traveled to “Prison Island”.

While the youth of the Knights of the Water Spirit took turns sleeping, no one noticed Derflinger, standing in the corner of the room. The blade was slightly glowing.

At the same moment, Louise, who was sleeping, had a dream. Louise, who hadn’t closed her eyes since yesterday evening, finally fell asleep.

The place she dreamed of was Bourdonné Street in Tristain, the place where she went with Saito to buy a sword. Louise and Saito held hands as they walked down the street.

“...I really miss it, it’s already been a year and a half.”

Somewhere in her mind, Louise knew this was a dream.

But she deliberately pretended not to notice. Because in the dream, Saito gently held Louise, and only smiled at her...

“Hey, Saito.”

“What is it?”

“Yo-you like, me?”

Louise ask, as she looked up with her face flushed. Saito immediately replied as he petted her beautiful hair.

“I like you, Louise.”

“Re-really?”

Louise, who has happy, beamed at once.

“B-but...”

“Yes?”

“M-my chest isn’t as big as Tiffa or Siesta.”

And then she fell into depression again.

Seeing that, Saito laughed.

“Wh-what... what’s so funny...?”

With pouty lips, Louise beat on Saito’s chest.

“Don’t worry, I like Louise’s small chest. In fact, truly, if your chest was too big, it would scare me.”

“Huh?”

Louise couldn’t help but smile with these unexpected words.

“Re-really? That’s true, you’re not lying?”

“Of course it’s true.”

“But small also has a limit. M-my chest is just a small lemon, but Siesta said that I’m a washboard...”

“Well, I like your delicate little lemons. Smooth and cute. Compared to melons, of course I’d choose lemons.”

“It is?”

For a moment, Louise’s face beamed with delight, but changed to an uneasy expression immediately.

“What about th-that girl... Tabitha? She’s smaller than me.”

“If Tiffa is a melon, and I am a little lemon... Tabitha is pretty much an olive”, Louise muttered.

“Tabitha is an important friend, but she’s still a child. And it’s bad to aim at children, right?”

Saying that, Saito shrugged. Louise continued her questioning.

“I, I lack the sexual charm of the princess. I know, actually, don’t boys like that kind of thing?”

“The princess is really beautiful, but I’m not good with assertive girls. I like the pure girls like Louise.”

“But I’m jealous of other girls. I don’t want to see Saito get too close with other girls.”

“I know, Louise, I have my eye only on you now.”

Louise felt she was about to ascend to heaven by Saito kissing her neck.

“Why... why is Saito so gentle and considerate?”

“It goes without saying, because I like you.”

“Li-liar...”

Louise blushed.

“I’m not a liar.”

“Bu-but my chest is a washboard, and I’m jealous. A-also I’ll take a whip and beat you, treat you like a dog, and do a lot of other excessive things to you. However, y-you still like me?”

“Well, I like everything about you.”

Saying that, Saito hugged Louise close.

With just that, Louise needed a reboot.

How is h-he doing this... really. What is this...?

But I feel very happy. My cheeks buried in Saito's chest, I feel extremely happy.

"Louise, you... like me?"

Saito whispered in Louise's ear.

After Louise's moment of insight... she mustered her courage and said.

"Well, like, of course I like... I really like you, Saito."

I've always wanted to say it... but I've been unable to say those important words.

But in a dream, she had the courage to express herself...

But, she didn't have a chance to say it again.

Because she wasn't qualified...

As soon as she realized this fact, Louise's consciousness could no longer be deceived by a dream.

Louise tightly held Saito in her heart, and then like sugar, he melted to nothing.

"Saito... no, Saito... don't just disappear like this!"

The ground at Louise's feet collapsed, and her body was swallowed into a pitch-black cave.

In this way, Louise fell into a deeper dream...

CHAPTER 9:

THE LEGEND OF THE VOID

At the same time that Louise was dreaming...

Saito, who was imprisoned in the “Prison Island”, was also in the middle of a dream.

“...here is?”

Before his eyes was the endless desert horizon as the bright red evening sun was setting.

This was the same place that Saito had seen in his dreams before.

The desert of 6000 years ago.

Saito immediately realized this. After all, as it was the third time for him, it would be easy for him to understand.

“Am I seeing the rune’s memory again?”

Then Saito slowly got up.

“What happened after that...?”

In the last dream, the Founder Brimir was preparing to fire the “Void” on an Elven city.

At that time, the “Lífþrasir” rune engraved on Saito’s chest reacted, causing him to lose consciousness on the spot.

“The location of the Elven city from before, I remember it was...”

After looking around... Saito was scared and speechless.

Everything was long gone.

The mountain range where the “Shrine” had been, was like the crater from the impact of a meteorite, and the Elven city, which was originally prosperous as it lay at the foot of the mountain, had disappeared without a trace. Like a fjord, the seawater flowed into the extremely large impact crater.

“No, way...?”

Saito whispered in consternation, and limply fell to his knees.

It actually disappeared... such a huge city, it just disappeared like this.

“Why did this happen, how did it come to this...?”

A hot stream flowed from deep in Saito’s throat, and he threw up on the spot.

In the vast desert, a gigantic hole suddenly appeared.

It was simply the “Void” itself... thought Saito.

What actually happened here... even if Saito’s mind was confused, he immediately perceived it.

That was the “Void” magic, whose destructive power far exceeded that of “Explosion”, “Life”.

The Founder Brimir had cast that spell on the Elven city.

“Damn... he actually did it.”

That was the death of half of the Elves, the true face of the “Great Disaster” from 6000 years ago...

This hopeless scene couldn’t help but bring tears to Saito’s eyes.

An unprecedented feeling of powerlessness attacked Saito. His heart was full of anger, sadness, and the empty feeling of powerlessness.

This is a dream... a memory of the past, Saito understood.

But his heart was full of regret.

“I couldn’t stop it... I was right there, right then, but I couldn’t stop it...”

“Young familiar, you’re still here?”

At that time, a hoarse voice came from behind Saito. Suddenly looking back, he saw the the Founder Brimir, with a face that looked pale like a ghost.

“Mr. Brimir...”

Saito roared in an oppressive voice.

“Why, why! Was this really the only way? Tell me!”

“...”

After a brief silence, Brimir spoke.

“That’s right. This was the only way for our tribe to survive.”

“What is this! Are you not able to still communicate?!”

Saito approached Brimir, clenching his fist like he was preparing for a fist fight.

But Brimir shook his head quietly.

“It’s useless, communication is basically meaningless.”

“Why...?”

For Saito’s question, Brimir wearily explained.

“I should’ve told you before... The dispute between our tribe and the elves is the loss of inhabitable land triggered by the ‘Upheaval’ caused by the ‘Wind Stones’ going out of control.”

“Right...”

Saito, his eye still serious, nodded his head for him to continue.

“However, I wonder; what exactly is the root cause of the ‘Wind Stones’ going out of control? As long as we understand this, you can save the continent without having to fight with the Elves again.”

“The reason for going out of control...?”

Saito thought of what Julio said before. There seemed to be many veins of “Wind Stones” beneath Halkeginia, and once every several 10,000 years an upheaval would occur when the “Wind Stones” had accumulated too much spirit power.

It that was the reason, mankind would be truly helpless. Even if they used the “Void” like Louise’s “Explosion” to blow it up, it would be impossible to eliminate all of Halkeginia’s “Wind Stones”. Moreover, that type of mental power consumption would basically be unsupportable.

“What, ultimately, is the reason?”

After the question was asked, Brimir’s looked behind Saito and then spoke.

“It’s the great mountain in the desert, the Elves call it ‘The Great Will’.”

“...what?”

Saito couldn't help but shout and looked back.

A big piece had been cut out of the mountain range.

This mountain range is the culprit for the continents
“Upheaval”...?

Just as Saito was going to stupidly open his mouth, Brimir continued to explain.

“The so-called ‘Great Will’ is basically a gigantic ‘Spirit Stone’, and it connects to the entire continent’s spirit stones through underground veins. Once every several 10,000 years, the accumulated spirit power in that mountain range will seek an outlet and spread across the entire continent, causing a reaction in the ‘Wind Stones’... This is the cause of the world-destroying ‘Upheaval’.”

“How is this...”

The contents of Brimir’s explanation made Saito feel like his head was being beaten.

So you’re saying that the cause of the “Wind Stones” going out of control is this “Holy Land” that sunk at the bottom of the sea 6000 years in the future...?

No, but remember... Luctiana should’ve also said it.

There is a lot of spirit power in the sea area where the “Devil’s Gate” is located. Does that mean that the reason is because the “Holy Land’ was originally a large piece of spirit stone?

So that means, the real reason that Brimir destroyed the Elven city... wasn’t to seize the land of the Elves, but to destroy the “Great Will”.

“But in that case, why did you have to destroy the Elves?!”

“Don’t tell me you couldn’t persuade the Elves to give up that city?”

Saito said.

“You just have to clearly explain, the world is truly facing a crisis and the Elves will...”

“I’ve already tried to communicate with them several times.”

Brimir responded.

“But, that stubborn Elven council wouldn’t listen at all. They state that if the world is destroyed, that is the decision of the ‘Great Will’. And the Elven city at the foot of the mountain range is the only place in the world that will not be affected by the ‘Wind Stones’ going out of control.”

Saito was suddenly speechless hearing this. In fact, it indeed probably would be like that if one day, someone suddenly would ask him to leave the place where he lived...

Even if it was Saito, he would prioritize protecting his homeland over the destruction of Halkeginia. Of course, that wouldn't mean that Halkeginia would be left to fend for itself. But if his homeland was destroyed for this reason, he definitely wouldn't accept it.

"There is no way to negotiate with the Elves, it's just a waste of time. Also, more and more of my people are pro-war, and a war is on the verge of breaking out. But I'm still... Sasha and I are still seeking a possibility, until the last moment. But..."

Just like an exhaust vent, Brimir spoke unceasingly.

"On the day I went to negotiate with the Elven council, all my efforts turned to smoke."

"What happened?"

"The village of 'Nidabelio' where my tribe lives, was attacked and destroyed by the Elves."

Hearing this, Saito gasped.

Nidabelio, the place he saw before in the dream he had in Romalia. He remembered that it was the original place that Brimir settled... a small village with a lot of children.

“Even now I’m unclear, what was the cause, or who started it. After all, in the face of Elves who can use powerful spirits, my people truly were too weak. The village was destroyed by fire, and the children who couldn’t escape were killed. You can’t call that fighting, but a one-sided slaughter. By the time I returned, it was already too late.”

Brimir said with a hollow voice.

“I made up my mind at that time. I would use the power of the ‘Void’, bestowed by the gods, to protect my people...”

“ ... ”

Saito opened his mouth to say something... but no words would come.

No matter the reason, you shouldn’t use a terrible magic that could level a city in an instant... but if you think about it, haven’t I been using this power all the time in this world?

The “Weapons from Earth” that Brimir brought to this world, the “Rocket Launcher”, “Zero Fighter”, Tiger Tank”; to Halkeginia, all these “Weapons” were overpowered.

If someone important was murdered... for example, if Louise was killed, he would abandon everything and fight in the war without hesitation to seek revenge. At that time, even the nuclear weapons sleeping in the “Holy Land” would be used without a doubt.

“But... but... damnit.”

Saito stared at the empty “crater” that had appeared in the desert.

That had caused a lot of Elven sacrifices...

Several thousand years later, this had led to Halkeginia and the Elves hating each other.

With his fists shaking and tears flowing, Saito could only feel an inexplicable sorrow.

“...Demon.”

At that time, a sound like a groan came from the ground.

Hearing it, Saito got chills, and turned towards the sound.

When did she appear...

In front of him was a female Elf glaring at Brimir with a vengeful expression.

With blonde hair like Tiffania and clear, emerald eyes under slender eyelashes.

The one coming was Sasha, the first generation “Gandálfr”

“Ms. Sasha...”

With a cold sigh, Saito whispered.

However, in Sasha's eyes it seemed like Saito didn't exist at all.

She glared at Brimir with eyes full of rage.

"Why... why did you want to destroy my homeland!"

Sasha, dragging the sword in her hand, advanced step by step.

A startled Saito couldn't help but shout.

Because in Sasha's hands was Saito's familiar sword.

"Derf..."

It was Derflinger from before he was destroyed by the "Elemental Brothers".

"It wasn't a different sword that went through his chest, it was me."

Saito thought about what Derflinger said.

"Ms. Sasha, you can't do this...!"

Saito tried to stop Sasha, knowing what was about to happen next.

But he didn't know why he couldn't make a sound, and his body couldn't move, just like a rock.

"Hey, hello, what's going on, why is this happening now...?"

Saito was shocked. At that time, he suddenly remembered what Louise said.

“...The dream you see is the memories imprinted in the rune. So the history that has already happened can’t be changed.”

Right, the dream I’m seeing is just the “Memory” that is engraved in the rune. No matter how hard I try, I can’t change what happened 6,000 years ago...

“I’ll curse you! Brimir, you’re a demon! You stole my heart... then betrayed me!”

Sasha slowly lifted Derflinger.

Like Saito, the “Lífþrasir” rune shined on her chest.

“In order to cast Life... Brimir used the power of Lífþrasir.”

She’ll die soon.

Saito knows this clearly being the same type of familiar.

“Sasha, I certainly committed a sin. And this sin can never be repaid.”

The rune on Sasha’s left hand glowed fiercely, and looked like the final flash of life.

“Brimir!”

“Stop!”

Saito can't help but scream, but his body still wouldn't move...

Moving slow, just like slow-motion, Sasha moved to Brimir.

“...What?”

He didn't know why, but there was no indication that Brimir dodged.

Sasha body was covered in wounds.

If he wanted to, it would be easy to dodge.

But Brimir seemed to accept it with open arms. So just like that, Sasha stabbed Brimir's chest with Derflinger.

“Ah...oh...”

Derflinger, stained in the blood of Brimir, emerged from Brimir's back.

“...Why!”

Sasha opened her big, green eyes in shock.

Brimir willingly letting the sword stab him surprised her the most.

“I committed a crime. I fell in love with you, the familiar.”

Putting his hands behind her back, Brimir tightly hugged Sasha's petite body.

"For love, I've betrayed my own people. My descendants and Elves will be bound in mutual hatred for the next several thousand years. I failed to be the savior of the world."

At that time, Saito, who was blankly looking at what was happening in front of him, noticed something.

He saw the "Gandálfr" rune engraved on the back of Sasha's left hand gradually disappear.

"Brimir... what the hell, did you do...?"

"But, this is correct, this is the way to save you."

This can save Sasha? What is Brimir saying?

Why did Sasha's familiar runes disappear?

No, wait a minute. The "Gandálfr" rune disappeared, does that mean that the "Lífprásir" rune also will...

The events happening in front of Saito gripped his mind in confusion

"...Think about it, this definitely has meaning. What exactly is the meaning of the dream that the rune is letting me see?"

“...Damn, damn...”

Sasha, with Brimir in her arms, was sobbing like a child.

“Damn, why is it me... God, why, give me this power!?”

“Brimir...”

“I don’t need this power at all... I truly do not need it!”

Brimir’s scream, on the brink of death, echoed across the desert at sunset.

CHAPTER 10:

THE ESCAPE

“Mr. Brimir!”

With a shout, Saito woke up.

Gasping desperately, he looked around.

He was still confined within the stone walls of the “Prison Island” cell.

Looking down at his chest, he saw a sweat-soaked jacket. It seemed like the “Lífþrasir” rune hadn’t reacted.

After a while... the sound of a drop, a drop of water dripped on his leg, confusing Saito.

“...?”

Water drops continued to drip down, gradually wetting his pants.

“Huh... are you telling me, that I’m crying?”

Saito rubbed his eyes.

But his tears didn't stop. No matter how much he wiped them, they continued to flow.

"... Strange. Huh? Why am I crying...?"

Floating on the inside of Saito's closed eyelids, was Brimir's expression of sadness.

"Barely, I just vaguely remember... that something very sad happened."

The words Derflinger incidentally had said before floated through Saito's mind. Such a sad tragedy had occurred six thousand years ago, which led to Derflinger sealing his memory.

"Brimir and Sasha were originally in love..."

They held no hatred for each other.

But, in the end it had come to that kind of ending...

Brimir only wanted to save his people, and Sasha... had to avenge those people who had been massacred.

Saito wiped his eyes with the cuff of his sleeve.

"Yes, now isn't the time to cry..."

In his mind, he desperately contemplated the meaning of the dream he just had.

Why is it that the familiar rune let Saito dream of a memory from six thousand years ago...

6,000 years ago, the “Great Catastrophe”, which had caused the death of half of the Elves, was the “Void” spell “Life” cast by the Founder Brimir. In order to eliminate the cause of the wind stones going out of control, which was actually a giant chunk of “Spirit Stone”, Brimir blew up the “Holy Lands” along with the Elven city.

But... at that same time, a doubt floated up in Saito’s mind.

“But isn’t this a bit weird?”

Since the “Holy Land” had been flattened 6,000 years earlier, why was the issue of the “Wind Stones” going out of control happening again...?

Saito, racking his brain, tilted his head in doubt.

“I don’t understand... but that this has some meaning is right.”

Why should the “Holy Land” be destroyed again...?

No, wait a moment... Saito suddenly remembered something as he racked his brain.

In Saito’s mind, the remnants of the crater made in the desert, as well as a large chunk of the “Holy Land’s”

mountain range coincided with the scene of the “Dragon’s Nest” surrounded by the formation of strange rocks.

“...Right, isn’t all of the ‘Holy Land’ sunk to the bottom of the sea?”

Perhaps the “Holy Land” hadn’t been completely destroyed...

In other words, the “Life” that Brimir fired didn’t completely destroy the “Holy Land”...?

That made sense. Why were the “Wind Stones”, which should go out of control once every several tens of thousands of years, about to go out of control again... Was the current instance of the “Wind Stones” going out of control because Founder Brimir didn’t completely destroy the “Holy Land” 6,000 years ago...?

“That’s right, this must be it...”

Saito was convinced. At that time, Brimir had failed to completely destroy the cause of the “Wind Stones” going out of control.

It only leveled half of the “Holy Land”, thus delaying the destruction of Halkeginia.

“Wait a moment, if that’s the case...”

Saito, with his hands across his chest, sunk deeper into thought.

The “Holy Land”, which had sunk to the bottom of the sea.

The Founder’s Void, which had awakened in Louise.

“Right...!”

Saito softly cried.

As long as Louise’s “Void” destroyed the “Holy Land” sleeping at the bottom of the sea again, wouldn’t it be possible to stop the “Wind Stones” from going out of control, and save Halkeginia? That way, they could avoid a battle in order to compete for land and war breaking out with the Earth.

“There’s a chance... this way there’s a chance.”

This caused hope to suddenly spring up in Saito’s heart.

“I have to tell Louise about this immediately...”

Thinking this... Saito was suddenly shocked.

How could he tell Louise about this from the prison...?

If the combined force of the “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands” began to invade the Earth, it would be too late...

At this time, there was a clatter in the corner of the cell, the sound of a pile of books.

Looking, Saito saw Tabitha's surprised face gazing at him.

"Tabitha, you're awake?"

Saito promptly asked.

Right then he'd been too absorbed in thought and had completely forgotten that Tabitha was also there.

"You were just talking in your sleep, were you dreaming?"

"Well, a little. You didn't see me crying just now, did you?"

Asked the question, Tabitha was hesitantly silent, then nodded her head. [\[1\]](#)

"Really. I let you see an embarrassing side of me."

"It's nothing, everybody, cries."

Tabitha shook her head.

Then Saito stood up, and sat next to Tabitha.

"Hey, Tabitha. Is there any way to escape from here?"

"No, there is no way at the moment."

"Oh... That's true."

On the day they had been locked up here, Saito had tried all the escape methods he had seen in the dramas or movies. But reality wasn't that simple... it could be said that the fantasy world isn't that naïve. What's more, even if they suffered through the effort to escape here, outside was an island in the middle of the ocean. Even with Tabitha's magical flight, it definitely wouldn't take long to exhaust her magical power.

Just then, Tabitha's words suddenly piqued Saito's curiosity.

"... You just said, there's no way at the moment?"

Tabitha nodded her head, and gently pushed up her glasses.

"When the time is right, there will be a chance to escape. So wait quietly."

"But we don't have much time left..."

Saito couldn't help but whisper this. Before the "Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Land" began to invade the Earth, he had to tell Louise about the dream he just had now. And...

Saito looked down at his chest.

"Time may be running out..."

"..."

Consequently, Tabitha silently pulled something from her cloak.

It was a piece of parchment that had be folded repeatedly.

“What’s that?”

“Mixed in with the breakfast things today, the secret code of the Knights of Parterre.”

“Secret code...”

Saito almost couldn’t help but blurt this out, and immediately covered his mouth.

“The Knights of Parterre, is it Isabella?”

Asking in a low voice, Tabitha silently nodded.

“After learning I was arrested, she started the rescue operation alone. The secret code corresponds to ‘The Book of St. Aegis’ and can be deciphered.”

Tabitha’s sight fell to Brimir’s holy scripture in her hands.

“So that’s it...”

Saito felt a great sense of admiration, no wonder she was so calm, since that’s how it is. Tabitha had known for a while that her cousin Isabella would begin acting immediately.

“When’s the escape?”

“When the next meal is delivered.”

The moment Tabitha responded with this.

Boom———!

The deafening explosion caused all of “Prison Island” to shake.

“Wh-what’s going on?”

The ship’s deck sharply rocked with the violent impact.

Colbert’s “Ostland” launched a kamikaze attack on the buildings of Prison Island.

“Woaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Guiche emitted a mournful screech.

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

The teenagers of the Knights of the Water Spirit desperately clung to the side of the ship, standing firm to avoid being thrown off of the ship.

Malicorne, who hit the side of the ship, bounced back and forth a few times across the deck.

The hit collapsed a sturdy wall and stirred up a lot of dust.

After the impact subsided, a momentary silence enveloped everything.

“Truly useless, and you still call yourselves the Queen’s personal bodyguards!”

Éléonore roared as she held the steering wheel.

But even her hands were shaking slightly.

Due to the low buildings of “Prison Island”, to collide they had to fly with the bottom of the ship almost touching the ground, requiring rather sophisticated maneuvering techniques, unlike the suicide attack on the Elven tower.

Of course, extreme low altitude flight was easy to say and hard to do, so the bottom of the ship cut through the ground, and crashed into the building.

“... The ship seems to be fine.”

Kirche said as the dust made her cough.

“Well fortunately I anticipated this earlier, so I reinforced the ship in advance.”

Colbert, standing on the front deck of the ship, proudly nodded.

Before their departure, Colbert had attached the armor of the “Tiger Tank” to the front of the ship with “Alchemy”. The

steel armor of the “Tiger Tank” was harder than all the metal from Halkeginia.

“Prison Island”, with a diameter of two leagues, sounded a low alarm.

Then Colbert pointed his wand at the collapsed stone wall and fired a “Fireball”, blowing open a large hole for everyone to invade inside with.

“Okay everyone, are you ready?”

Colbert said with a serious expression as he looked back.

The youths of the Knights of the Water Spirit stood up together and silently pulled out their wands.

Although some people looked a bit timid, and some people looked stubborn, no one had complained. After all, everyone had a noble’s dignity.

“This is a race against time. While the Elves are confused, you have to find Saito and Ms. Tabitha. Per the plan, I and Ms. South Gotha will distract the Elves and fight for time. You have to find those two as soon as possible.”

“We can’t hold it for too long. If you want to save them, you have to move fast.”

Fouquet grinned, and immediately jumped into the diffusing dust.

“Then let us move too.”

Kirche said.

Like the combat plan, the soldiers going to save Saito and Tabitha divided into three routes.

Guiche, Malicorne, Kirche, along with Sylphid formed one team, and the remaining people were divided and led by Reynald and Gimli. Although there were few people in Guiche’s group, there was the “Triangle Mage” Kirche, and the “Rhyme Dragon” Sylphid. Colbert believed that it was sufficient combat power.

Each group leader was allocated a “Holy Land” weapon to hand over to Saito later. Derflinger was placed in a magic bag, and carried with them.

“Big sis... I will definitely save you, chirp!”

Sylphid, who had turned into a girl, held up Tabitha’s wand.

“Hey~ please, wait for me for a moment.”

They saw Guiche embrace a mole that had to be held with two hands.

It was Guiche’s familiar, a giant mole.

“You want to take that mole along, Guiche?”

Malicorne asked.

“Yes. My Verdandi’s nose is very effective, maybe it coming along could be useful?”

“Are you sure it won’t get in the way?”

Hearing this, Kirche wrinkled her brow.

“Please don’t look at her that way, her footsteps are very nimble.”

Guiche gently placed Verdandi down by his feet, and with a “sniff sniff sniff”, her nose moved as she smelled the air.

“The first team to rescue those two, immediately use the “Little Snake” to signal, and all teams must quickly retreat at the signal. If you are discovered by an Elf, you can’t fight, you have to run away. Don’t fight, if you can’t escape, surrender.”

After listening to Colbert’s reminder, the youth of the Knights of the Water Spirit strongly nodded their heads.

“I wish you all the best.”

Finally, Colbert sighed.

After the impact subsided, Saito trembled and looked up at the ceiling.

“Wh-what was the just now... That wasn’t Isabella, was it?”

“...Unsure.”

Tabitha replied.

“At least the Knights of Parterre wouldn’t do it like this.”

At this time, the sound of footsteps gradually approached from the other side of the metal door.

This immediately made Saito nervous. It shouldn’t be the Elven guards coming to see what the two of them were up to.

After a while... the sound of the door lock came in from outside.

While Saito tilted his head wondering, “What’s going on?” the cell door opened and the light from the passaged shined into the cell.

“I’ve made you wait, Lady Charlotte.”, an Elven guard, holding a magic lamp, lowered his voice and said.

“Huh?”

Saito was confused by the situation in front of him.

What’s going on? Saito turned to look at Tabitha.

“Chikasui”, Tabitha said.

“Ah!”

Hearing this, Saito got it.

On a closer look, there was a familiar dagger held in the elf’s hand.

“Chikasui” was one of the spies of the Knights of Parterre, and its true form was an “Intelligent Dagger” that can manipulate the essence of the wielder.

At first, even Saito thought that Chikasui was just a simple cross-dresser. When he learned the truth from Tabitha, he was greatly surprised.

“Elves have training against mental control, which is really difficult to deal with.”

“Is the explosion just now you?”

“No, I’m also unclear about the situation.”

To Saito’s question, Chikasui shook his head.

“But this is still a great opportunity to escape. Although it’s a little earlier than scheduled, please take advantage of this time to quickly escape.”

Then Chikasui gave Tabitha a tiny, baton-like wand.

“You may not be used to it, but it’ll be like this for the time being.”

“It will do.”

After nodding, Tabitha put the wand in her cape.

“Good, let’s go...”

Just when Saito was about to stand up, he felt dizzy.

Tabitha immediately supported Saito’s staggering body.

“What is it?”

“Oh, I’m fine... Just a little vertigo...”

While preparing to stand up on his own, Saito suddenly lost all the strength in his body and fell to the ground on the spot.

“Wh-what? Are my feet... not listening, to me...”

“What are you doing?”

A surprised Chikasui inquired.

“Sorry Mr. Chikasui... can you give me a weapon as well?”

“A weapon?”

“Yeah, I just need to hold a weapon, and I should be able to move...”

“Then please use me.”

Chikasui pulls out a short sword from his waist and handed it to Saito.

When he held the short sword in hand, the rune on Saito's left hand immediately lit up. Even using the power of Gandálfr, there was no way to restore his lost strength, but his body definitely relaxed a lot.

I should be able to move for a while...

"Let's go."

In the chaos of the explosion, Saito and Tabitha escaped their cell.

"Huff, huff, huff... Wa-wait a minute, you guys."

In the prison passage, with the sound of the alarm, Guiche and the others were running like crazy. As Colbert expected, the Elves seemed to be in a state of confusion. However, after all, the chaos can't last for too long. If they don't hurry and save Saito and Tabitha, they would become nothing but rats in a bag.

"Well, I never thought we'd go as far as to invade an Elven fortress a second time."

Malicorne said with sweat on his forehead.

“But after this mission is successful, we can all be honored. No, maybe we can also be granted territory? Moreover, there’s also Her Majesty Queen Henrietta’s lips...”

“The premise is to first return alive? I don’t want to pursue knighthood lying in a coffin.”

“Tiny, where are you! Answer me, chirp, chirp!”

“Please, we’ll be discovered if you call with such a loud voice!”

Kirche, running in the front, looked back to remind Sylphid.

“You guys also, cut the irrelevant chatter, look.”

Kirche pointed her wand to the front.

Although they didn’t hear Sylphid’s voice, they were still coming... a team of two Elven guards were yelling something in Elvish (Elf language) as they ran towards the group.

“Okay, let’s go!”

“Roger.”

Guiche and Malicorne immediately turned right.

“Wait a second, magic incoming!”

The magic they saw the Elven guard begin to chant was Firstborn wind magic.

A tornado-like air vortex fired from the palm of their hand.

“Woaaaaah!”

The panicked Malicorne immediately chanted the “Air Hammer” spell.

Speaking in terms of results it saved their lives, but the Firstborn wind magic caused an earth-shattering boom, which exploded in the center of the passage. Guiche’s group was blown away by the wind and rolled on the floor.

“Go-goodness, what a terrible power.”

A pasty-faced Guiche said.

If they had actually taken that attack right then, their skeletons would cease to exist...

“I-it’s coming again!”

Malicorne shouted.

“Everybody flee, I’ll stop them here.”

Like he’d made up his mind, Guiche suddenly stood up.

“Facing Elves, your Golem is just child’s play!”

“Anyway, you can watch and be amazed, I’ve also matured.”

Then Guiche chanted a spell, and waved his rose-wrapped wand.

The petals flying in the air immediately became eight “Bronze Valkyries”.

“How’s that? One more than usual... Woah!”

As a result, the bronze valkyries were broken into pieces in the blink of an eye by the magic the Elves fired.

“Really, what the hell are you doing?!”

Kirche launched “Fireball” magic at the same time. Triple the firepower, three balls of flame with tracking abilities rushed towards the Elves.

Then the fireballs exploded, causing a succession of violent noises in the prison.

“Oh, did I win?”

“No. The difference in the power of our magic and “Firstborn” magic is too vast.”

Just before the fireballs hit, a stone wall appeared to block it that Kirche couldn’t see through.

From the other side of the burning flames came the sound of Elves chanting.

“Sylphid, what kind of magic can you use?”

Guiche asked, sounding anxious, but Sylphid shook her head apologetically.

“I can’t do anything, the spirit power is being suppressed by the Elves. Without spirit power, Sylphid is useless.”

“How could this be...”

Guiche held his aching head. Even if she changed back into a “Rhyme Dragon”, there was no way to fly here and would hinder their action...

“In short, run first!”

“Correct.”

With that, Kirche fired a “Fireball”.

The flames and sound of the explosion should be enough to block the line sight.

When everyone returned up the passage, they escaped around the corner of cross passage of the intersection.

“The enemy is chasing us, chirp!”

Kirche looked back and cast another “Fireball”.

“Really, if you keep that up, you’re quickly going to run out of mental energy.”

Just then, they found two familiar figures in front of them.

“Oh, isn’t that Saito, Saito!”

Guiche shouted

“Chirp, chirp, big sis is also there!”

“Hey~ Saito! We came to save you!”

Malicorne shouted as he waved his arm.

However, the situation really felt off, and Guiche, noticing the abnormality, frowned.

Say, how exactly did those two escape from their cell...?

Saito and Tabitha seems to not notice everybody, and passed by Guiche and the others.

“Huh?”

After stopping, they turned around.

The next moment, the two people were engulfed in the magic launched by the Elves pursuing Guiche and the others.

In the hall where the alarm went off, Saito and Tabitha made a mad dash for the exit.

The sound of an explosion came again from another location.

The sound of footsteps and the roar of Elves can be heard everywhere. However, the pursuing elves, are being scattered all over the place to a major degree by small magic dolls that look exactly like Saito and Tabitha.

“Skírnir”

This is one of the “Magic Tools” used by the “Mjöðvitnir”, a magic doll that can change its appearance to look just like someone by absorbing their blood. When King Joseph had perished, the Knights of the Parterre were detained and brought here by Chikasui. They were suitable to be used as bait.

At the corner of the passage, Tabitha stopped Saito with her hand.

“Stop.”

Then she cast the “Summon Water” spell, and created a puddle at her feet. She used the water surface as a mirror to confirm whether there was an Elf down the passage.

“No problem.”

Going a few steps forward, Tabitha waved at Saito behind her.

“There are very few guards.”

“Um... It feels like they don't have time to round us up.”

Saito nodded. He didn't know if it had anything to do with the violent explosion just now...

At the end of the passage was a metal door, that was much like what Saito saw in Adyl. It may be a magically driven lifting device, similar to an elevator.

“Tabitha, do you know how to use this?”

Tabitha shook her head.

“It may only react to the Elvish language.”

“Isn't that a dead end...?”

“Even if the device doesn't move, you can still fly”

That made sense. It seemed like Tabitha wanted to fly in the elevator shaft using “Flight” magic. That was certainly the fastest way to the surface.

After chanting a spell, Tabitha shot an “Ice Javelin” towards the metal door.

The extremely sharp ice spear hit the door directly.

But the metal door is motionless.

“... Firstborn magic.”

“Can’t destroy it?”

“We can only find a different route.”

“Right.”

Just as quick as they gave up on the thought, and as they turned away to leave...

The lifting device door slowly opened.

“Oh, Tabitha, we’re soooo lucky...”

Saito didn’t have a chance to be happy.

Elven guards immediately appeared from the open door.

“How is there another Saito!?”

Kirche shouted.

“There’s also another big sis here, chirp!”

“God~ What the hell is going on!? I’m losing my mind!”

Guiche held his head and groaned. A little magic doll tumbled at his feet.

“It’s a magic doll that can change its outer appearance, Tabitha must be the one spreading them.”

“It’s good that it can confuse the Elves, but even we can’t find the boss.”

Malicorne muttered.

After all, it’s impossible to distinguish from their exterior.

“However, with this stuff scattered all over the place, it means the two of them most likely already escaped.”

“Oh, but time is running out...”

“Oh, what’s this here?”

“Why are you asking that now, this is an Elf’s... huh, who’s voice is that just now?”

A skeptical Guiche looked back, and the other three showed a look of incomprehension as they shook their head.

“What? What did you say about Elves?”

They heard the voice again.

“Did you wake up?”

At that time, Kirche was shocked, and pulled Derflinger out with her hand.

“Oh, isn’t this Ms. Big Tits? Where’s my partner, and where exactly are we?”

“It’s Saito’s talking sword! How come you suddenly woke up?”

“I just woke up, so what exactly is going on?”

“This is an Elven Prison.”

“Prison? What are you saying, how come we’re in this kind of place?”

“We came here to rescue your master.”

Then Kirche simply explained how Saito was arrested and locked up in “Prison Island”. She briefly explained that they had come to help him.

While silently listening to the explanation, Derflinger responded,

“... Gotcha. No wonder it constantly feels like my partner is nearby.”

“Really? You can tell which are fake?”

“Of course, don’t underestimate the bond of my partner and I.”

Derflinger’s blade started clicking

“This is really reliable.”

“Oh, Verdandi, what are you doing?”

At that time, Guiche's familiar was trying to dig in the ground.

"There are no 'Earthworms' here."

Malicorne said.

They heard Verdandi digging around, absorbed in trying to dig a hole in the ground.

Guiche and the others looked at each other in surprise.

The trio of Elves charged out of the lift, and immediately surrounded Saito and Tabitha.

Tabitha quickly pulled out her wand and chanted "Icicle Blast" magic.

The Elf in front couldn't defend against the spell, and were directly hit by a flying ice arrow. Not letting an enemy sense the spell is a specialty of the Knights of Parterre.

The other two cursed in Elvish. The next moment, they pulled out sabers and threw them like boomerangs.

"Tabitha!"

Saito acted quickly. The "Gandálfr" runes allowed Saito to react quickly, he cut in front of Tabitha to protect her, and

reflected the saber.

That wasn't over. The sword that was reflected turned around in the air and went straight for Saito. That and Ali's "Sword of Will" were the same Firstborn Magic.

But Saito expected that. If this was the first time you saw this trick, you might get stabbed in the back. However, as long as you know the trick, it was nothing to be scared of. Moreover, Ali could manipulate 4-5 swords at the same time, but the Elven guards could only manipulate one.

After reflecting the sword, Saito charged directly forward. The Elf, with a horrified expression on his face, took a body shot from Saito, and dropped to the floor. Tabitha followed up and fired an ice arrow. The elf laying on the floor was frozen hand and foot, and couldn't move.

The last Elf yelled something, then the stone wall burst with a rumble and a human-shaped stone doll appeared. The stone doll raised its fist and tried to flatten Saito.

Saito shouted, "Wow," and rolled on the ground. The stone doll wielded its fist like a giant hammer, and smashed a giant hole in the ground. Tabitha immediately launched "Ice Javelin", and a huge ice spear hit the head of the stone doll. However, even if the stone doll's head shrank, that didn't hinder its movement as the "boom, boom," sound of its fists sounded as they smashed towards Saito.

“Woah... wa-wait...!”

Saito continued to dodge in a sequence of close calls. The sword techniques he was proud of were useless against the stone man. If Derflinger was in his hands, he might be able to smash the stone man. However there really was no way with the short sword in his hands.

“... Dammit, what should I do?”

Saito’s forehead broke out in cold sweat. They were in a pinch, one where they were being cornered.

If they uses up their time here, reinforcements would soon come from the lift.

If it was the normal Saito, no matter how many enemies, he could get out of danger with the power of “Gandálfr”. However, the current Saito had used up too much physical strength, and without Louise there to stimulate her familiar’s emotions...

Seeing Saito desperately gasping, even the power of the “Gandálfr” eventually had a limit. Sneaking a peek at Tabitha, you could see an anxious expression that she rarely showed.

At that time... with a crash, small pieces of stone fell on Saito’s head.

“Huh?”

This made Saito look up.

The next moment, a huge “bang” sounded, and something dug through the ceiling.

Before Saito could even make a sound, a lot of rubble poured down and buried the Elven guards along with the stone doll.

“Wh-what happened...?”

Just as Saito opened his mouth in confusion...

A round object fell from the hole in the ceiling.

“Huh?”

This puzzled Saito.

What fell in front of his eyes was a mole with big eyes, shining with intelligence.

“Mole?”

Just at the brink of confusion...

Saito suddenly realized that this mole looked very familiar.

“Aren’t you... Guiche’s familiar!?”

It must be true. Not only did this mole save his life in Albion, but he also stayed in his tent when he lost his partner

before. Even if it's a mole, he wouldn't forget how his partner looked.

"How did you get here...?"

As Saito wrinkled his brow in confusion, a familiar voice was heard coming from the hole in the ceiling.

"Hey~ It that Saito there?"

"Guiche!"

Saito shouted.

"This is the boss right?"

"That looks right."

"Big sister, Sylphid came to save you, chirp!"

"Malicorne, Kirche, and Sylphid!"

The Saito and Tabitha looked at each other.

Guiche's group cast "Float" magic, and jumped down from the hole in the ceiling.

"Big Sis, luckily you're alright, chirp!"

Sylphid hopped onto Tabitha's head, and hugged her tight.

"How did you get here?"

Saito asked everybody.

“It was on Queen Henrietta’s order.”

While answering, Guiche posed with his hair waving.

“In short, we pretended a bit, you see... hey, uhh, what are you doing!”

“You guys—-!”

Saito burst in to tears, and tightly grabbed Guiche and Malicorne.

“E-enough, you can let go. Please, you’re nose is running!”

Kirche, with a wry smile, pulled out a magic bag from under her cloak.

“Here, we also helped you out by bringing your sword.”

After taking out Derflinger, she handed it to Saito.

“Derf...”

When Saito received Derflinger.

“Hey Partner, long time, no see!”

“Woah!”

Shocked by Derflinger, Saito couldn’t help with opening his hand.

“D-Derf! You finally woke up!”

“Hey, do you have to be so surprised, I’m a little sad, ya know.”

Derflinger said in his usual tone.

“What have you been doing until now!? Even if I talked to you, you kept sleeping!”

Saito complained with an unhappy voice.

“Sorry, I was sleeping.”

“No kidding.”

Saito couldn’t help but smile. Just hearing Derflinger’s voice, he felt energized.

“Hey, pick me up partner.”

“Right.”

The moment he held Derflinger’s handle in his hand, the runes on Saito’s hand lit up and he felt like power gradually flowed into his body...

“Say, partner.”

Derflinger said in a sad voice.

“What is it?”

“I thought about it all. Really, thought about everything.”

“Right...”

This made Saito feel uncomfortable and he also didn't know what to say to comfort him.

Thought about everything...

Saito thought about everything he saw in the dream from Derflinger's point of view, the tragedy that occurred 6,000 years ago.

Including the moment that Sasha ran her beloved Brimir through the chest...

“Derf... I have a lot of things I need to ask.”

“Yeah, I know. I'll tell you everything.”

Seemingly determined, Derflinger answered.

“Hey, you two, can you talk about this later? Basically, we need to escape from here first.”

Kirche said.

“Elf reinforcements have come.”

Tabitha extended her wand from within Sylphid's arms, and looked up as she raised her head.

The sound of the Elves' footsteps approached.

“Ah, right...”

“Send the signal to retreat to everyone.”

Saying that, Guiche pulled out a small tube given him by Colbert, and ignited the magic inside the tube.

“TOOT!”

A shrill, ear splitting sound rang throughout the prison.

The “Little Singing Snake” was the modified magic weapon “Little Flying Snake”, and could produce a sound that can be heard no matter how many leagues away it was. Originally, it was a failed weapon Colbert made to be used on the “Zero Fighter”, so he never thought it would be used in this manner.

“*sigh*, you guys seem fierce.”

Colbert wiped the sweat from his forehead.

His tone was a bit casual, and his expression was very dignified. Although the distraction had succeeded in attracting many Elves, he was quickly run into a dead end, and he couldn’t escape from the firstborn magic he couldn’t oppose.

“This seems to be the end of the road.”

Colbert muttered with a despondent expression.

With eight Elves in pursuit, the results weren't bad.

Colbert's lips were twisted coldly. His present expression was not that of the gentle teacher he usually had, but that of the captain of the experimental team of the Magic Research Institute, the "Flame Serpent" that people were afraid of.

"I never hated you guys, but please join me on this journey."

The determined Colbert raised his wand upright. In order to protect the lives of his students, Colbert was ready to become the merciless "Flame Serpent" again.

A little blazing ball lit up the tip of his wand.

That was Colbert's trump card.

Fire, Fire Earth, a triangle spell of two parts fire combined with Earth. The water vapor in the air was converted to vaporized fuel oil with "Alchemy", and then ignited. A huge fireball would instantly expand and exhaust all the nearby oxygen, killing any creature within range.

This was the deadly magic "Explosion", which didn't distinguish between friend and foe.

It was also mostly effective against the Elves, but this magic does have its drawbacks.

Using it in this confined space, there was nothing Colbert could do for himself...

He saw the magic was about to be complete.

The wall in front of him collapsed with a rumble.

“What?”

This cause Colbert to lost his chant.

The small fireball that lit up the tip of his wand disappeared.

The thing that destroyed the prison wall was a giant stone golem that was nearly twenty feet tall.

Ms. South Gotha.

“What, you were here? Get out of the way, quick.”

Fouquet grinned as she sat on the shoulder of the golem.

“Ooooooooooooooooooh!”

As soon as he held Derflinger, Saito’s actions immediately became like the wind. He charged in between the Elven guards that were blocking their advance. Deftly dodging the magic arrows fired at him, he used Derflinger’s blade to absorb them.

It didn't matter how strong the Elves' firstborn magic was, it was meaningless if they couldn't chant. As soon as he saw an Elf try to chant magic, Saito immediately stunned the enemy with a melee attack.

"This situation isn't too bad, partner."

"Well, you really are the best."

"It's nice to hear you say that."

Derf's blade shook with laughter.

Of course it wasn't only that. The source of "Gandálfr's" power came from the movement of his heart. Everyone had come to rescue him... Guiche, Malicorne, Kirche, Sylphid, Colbert-sensei, and the members of the Knights of the Water Spirit... That lit a fire in Saito's heart.

Magic flew from behind him, providing cover for Saito. Kirche's fireballs burst; Tabitha's ice arrows accurately attacked the Elves' magic. Malicorne used "Air Hammer" to clear the path, and Guiche used an earth wall against the soldier pursuing behind them.

"Sylphid will cheer for everybody, chirp!"

The group rushed straight ahead and it didn't take long for a wall to block their way.

"It's a dead end!"

“Do we go back?”

“No, that won’t do. We’d be easy pickings...”

Saito grabbed the magic bag that Kirche brought along.

“Here, I’ll use this.”

He took out a “Weapon” of the “Holy Land”.

“The M72 anti-tank rocket.”

It was the same type as the “Staff of Destruction” that was used to smash Fouquet’s golem.

After removing the safety pin, Saito pulled out the back cover, and placed it on his shoulder after extending the inner tube. Without aiming, Saito undid the safety and shouted at the same time.

“Everybody, don’t stand behind me, and cover your ears!”

He pulled the trigger.

A rocket-type warhead with a tail was fired, exploding on impact.

They were surrounded by a loud noise, and the wall in front of them shattered.

On the other side of the hole blasted in the wall, the sun was shining on the surface of the sea.

“Yeah, success!”

Guiche shouted with joy.

About twenty feet down was the deck of the “Ostland”, that had crashed into the prison.

The other youths of the Knights of the Water Spirit seem to have already returned to the ship.

“Get ready to jump.”

“What?”

Kirche grabbed Saito’s hand and jumped straight down.

“Woooooooooooooooooah!”

The frightened Saito screamed in terror.

But before they hit the deck, their bodies suddenly started to lightly float.

It turned out that Kirche had cast “Float” magic earlier.

“Hey, Saito, you’re okay!”

As soon as they landed on the deck the members of the Knights of the Water Spirit immediately stepped forward and surrounded Saito.

“Gimli, Renault, and everybody... wow!”

“Boom!” a loud bang sounded, and a huge golem fell from the sky.

“What’s going on?”

Saito looked up and saw Colbert riding in the hands of the golem.

“Colbert-sensei!”

“Oh, Saito, you’re safe.”

Jumping quickly to the deck, Colbert immediately shouted at the back deck.

“Can you take off, Ms. Éléonore?”

“No, the steam system is broken!”

Éléonore yelled in reply as she held the steering wheel.

The impact from colliding with the prison just now seemed to have damaged the steam system.

“If we don’t escape immediately, we’ll be surrounded by Elves!”

Kirche reminded them.

“Hey, give it to me.”

Colbert, chanting fire magic, injected “Fire” into the system.

Right after it came in contact with the steam system. It began to rumble.

“It’s moving, it started!”

The “Ostland” slowly floated and flew up into the vast sky.

At dawn... Louise, who was lying in bed, woke up.

After sitting up, Louise wiped her eyes with her pajama cuffs.

Because Louise had cried a lot in her dreams.

It was a sad dream, a dream so sad that no more sadness could be added...

The impact of the dream was too big, and Louise was stunned for a while... At that time, there was a knock at the door.

“My apologies. Ms. Vallière, are you awake?”

The one who came was Siesta. Louise staggered as she stood up to open the door.

Seeing Louise’s expression, Siesta was surprised.

“What happened, Ms. Vallière?”

“It’s nothing.”

“How could it be nothing, aren’t you crying?”

“Who’s crying?”

“You are.”

“ ... ”

Louise looked away from Siesta.

“I had a dream.”

“Dream? A nightmare?”

“No, it was a sad dream.”

Saying that, Louise’s eyes fell on the clothes held in Siesta’s hands.

“What clothes are these?”

“This is the outfit that the Pope asked for Ms. Vallière to wear...”

Held in Siesta’s hands was the holy white garments worn by a priestess of Brimir. That was the outfit that Louise wore previously in “Aquileia” when she had served as a “Priestess”.

“Well, I’m prepared.”

Seemingly determined to do it, Louise groaned.

Louise changed into the holy garments of the Brimir faith and, accompanied by Siesta, went to the deck of the “St. Mark” as it floated in the air.

Under the endless blue sky, you could see scattered clouds and the deep blue sea of the “Holy Land”.

A large number of Romalian warships surrounded them in the local airspace, protecting the “St. Mark” that the Pope was on. Outside that, the fleets of the countries of Gaulia, Germania, Albion, and Tristain were deployed. In the center of Tristain’s fleet was the “Versanda”, a particularly eye-catching “Dragon Carrier Ship”, that Henrietta was aboard.

With a total of over 700 ships, this was the largest fleet in the history of Halkeginia. Of those, 250 were warships, and the rest were galleons carrying soldiers and supplies.

The 80,000 soldiers of the first wave of the “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Land” were on those ships. The remaining troops were on standby in the camp in the suburbs of Adyl, ready to proceed to the front lines.

The huge fleet was covered in flags, and the mighty army shocked Louise.

“Wow, it’s amazing...”

Siesta was stunned in bewilderment.

“Uh, indeed...”

But... Louise though.

No matter how large an army they prepare, the “Holy Land” was sleeping at the bottom of the sea.

“How is he going to send such a huge army?”

Tiffania and Josette, who had changed into the same holy garments as Louise, stood on the back deck of the ship.

As soon as Tiffania saw Louise, she rushed to her.

“Ah, Louise...”

Tiffania, looking restless, held Louise’s hand.

“Louise, you really... really aren’t changing your mind?”

“Yes.”

Louise nodded her head.

“The only way to save Halkeginia is to capture the ‘Holy Land’.”

“Louise, I...”

Louise gently put her hand on Tiffania’s trembling shoulder.

“Tiffa, please, trust me.”

“Louise...”

Seeing Tiffania’s pained expression, cause Louise’s chest to ache.

It’s my fault that I involved this half-elf girl, who quietly had lived in the forest of Albion, in such a cruel fate.

“Don’t worry, Tiffa. I’ll bring all of this to an end...”

“Right, yes, Louise, Saito, he...”

Just as Tiffania started to say something.

“I made you wait, ye ‘Saints’ who shall save Halkeginia.”

A smiling Julio stepped forward and saluted the two.

“The Pope’s prayers will be over soon. This way, please.”

“Yes...”

Looking at Julio with cold eyes, Louise silently followed in his steps.

Tiffania and Siesta both watched Louise leave, looking uneasy.

Pope Vittorio Serevare had been praying on the bow deck of the ship.

They saw him with his eyes closed, chanting a spell in a whisper.

The Pope, without a wink of sleep, or a drop to drink, prayed through the night continuously.

“What is his Holiness doing now?”

Louise asked Julio.

“You’ll know soon.”

Julio smiled happily, and turned his eyes to the sea.

Soon, Vittorio quietly stood up.

Looking at the sea from the bow of the ship, he opened his hands, and read what seemed to be rune characters.

Soon after...

An ear-ringing sort of rumbling sound rang through the nearby air.

“Wh-what?”

Louise couldn’t help but cover her ear because it sounded like the annoying sound of insects flapping their wings.

“This is the power of the ‘Void’... the sound of the tiny particles that make up everything in the world shaking.”

“You say that this is the Void?”

Then came the huge “rumble rumble”-like sound.

“The sea, is dividing...?”

At that moment, Louise’s eye widened in surprise.

The sea that divided below them exposed a huge black mountain range.

“That’s...”

The mountains slowly rose out of the sea, and a lot of sea water poured down them like a waterfall.

“Really, what just happened...?”

Louise asked with a look of shock.

“This is what the “Holy Land” originally looked like.”

NOTES

1. ↑ Here’s a little tidbit about Japanese affirmations/denials - if someone asks a question which is negative (In this case, “you didn’t”), the Japanese way to affirm that is by nodding, as if to say “you are correct, I didn’t”.

CHAPTER 11:

THE FAMILIAR OF ZERO

The “Ostland” flew towards the sun as it slowly rose from the sea.

The ship’s steam engine spewed black smoke, and could barely produce any speed. Colbert and Kirche took turns injecting flames into it and barely managed to keep the ship afloat.

On the half-destroyed deck, Saito listened to Guiche and the others explain the situation. The members of the Undine Knights, as well as Colbert and Kirche, had accepted Henrietta’s order and came to rescue Saito. Although Fouquet being there surprised Saito, it seemed that Tiffania had asked her to. Even though she kept saying, “I didn’t do it for you,” Saito still thanked her for her help.

After that... Saito said he wanted to be by himself for a bit, so he left the group.

Exhausted, Saito laid down in the shadow of the engine room door. As soon as he let go of Derflinger to place him on the floor, the feeling he’d collapse came over him.

“If I’m not holding Derf, I can’t even do anything...”

The burning pain in his chest had already disappeared. However, being able to feel the pain was much better. Now he felt as if his very existence was gradually disappearing.

“Damn it... so I really could move like that just now.”

“I say, partner.”

Derflinger spoke as he rolled across the floor.

“Yes?”

“You see, I’ve been silent about what happened just now.”

“What’s that, you secretive son of a gun.”

“Actually, just now, you being able to move so dexterously had nothing to do with the power of ‘Gandálfr’.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“You should already know that the power of ‘Gandálfr’ can only make you light as a feather and grant you mastery of ‘Weapons’. It’s impossible to supplement the vitality you’ve lost, partner.”

“Yeah, that’s right, isn’t it.”

Having said that, when he was holding “Chikasui” in the cell, his body definitely felt a lot lighter, but he didn’t recover his

actual physical strength.

“Just now, it was actually me giving you vitality.”

“What did you say?”

Saito couldn't help but ask.

“This isn't what you used to save me that time in Albion... is it?”

“Ah, Sasha taught me this ability.”

This “Legendary” sword had the ability to “let Gandálfr function using its absorbed magical reserves”. When facing the 70,000 man army, the seriously injured Saito relied on the power of Derflinger to stay alive.

“So, ah, partner, right now, uh...”

Derflinger spoke as if evading something. It's rare, thought Saito, for this noisy sword to start humming and hawing like that.

“Meaning that without Derf's power, I can't even walk?”

“Well that's what it means.”

Derflinger said awkwardly.

“...Right.”

Saito, still lying exhausted on the floor, sighed deeply.

“I really can’t deal with this. How can I protect Louise like this...?”

At this time, Colbert, who’d just repaired the steam engine, came back.

“Are you okay, Saito? You’re not looking very well.:

“Well, barely...”

Saito nodded his head uncertainly. Colbert and the others still didn’t know that “Lífprásir” had been consuming his life, and Saito didn’t want to worry everyone needlessly.

“Colbert-sensei, where is the ship currently heading?”

“Well, tentatively we wanted to return to Tristain via Gallia. However, given the state of the steam engine, the problem is whether we’ll make it or not.”

“The thing is, Colbert-sensei, I have a request.”,

Saito said as he stood up.

“What is it, Saito?”

“Please take me to the ‘Holy Land’.”

“What did you say?”

Colbert frowned at his words.”

“There’s something, I... I have to tell Louise. Or, at least, it’s something important that I have to tell her, so please Sensei, take me to the ‘Holy Land’.”

Saito clung to Colbert’s arm with a pleading expression.

But Colbert shook his head with a confused look.

“It’s a shame, but there’s no way to return to the ‘Holy Land’. If we return there, the Romalian Army will definitely catch you. The Queen commanded that you be escorted to a safe place. She also said that without you there as a part of the ‘Four of Four’, most of the Pope’s ambitions will be foiled.”

“That’s not it, Sensei. The Princess misunderstood. Even if I’m not in the ‘Holy Land’, it won’t stop the Pope’s plan... But if I go... if I explain it to Louise, I can save Halkeginia and Earth... and stop this ridiculous ‘Holy War’.”

“Saito... is what you said true?”

Faced with Saito’s bloodcurdling arguments, Colbert gasped.

“Yes... if I still have the time to do it...”

At the same time as when Saito spoke as if groaning, an uneasy commotion broke out on the foredeck of the ship

among the youths of the Undine Knights.

The very first to feel the strangeness was Malicorne, who was using “Farsight” magic to observe the “Holy Land”. Because of the huge fleet in the airspace around the “Holy Land”, Malicorne was unsure of what exactly they were trying to do... As he was watching with his magic, he noticed an abnormality.

“Th-th-th-th-that is a mou-mou-mountain...”

“What happened, Malicorne?”

Leaning against the broadside^[1], Guiche spoke perplexed as he sat down.

“Mou-mou, mou-mountains are floating!

“Oi, what are you saying all of a sudden?”

Guiche knit his brow, and bent his body toward the broadside.

“How can a mountain float, you gotta be joking... Wh-what is that!”

The deck of the “Ostland” immediately became as noisy as a hornet’s nest. All the young men of the Undine Knights looking towards the “Holy Land” were scared and their legs went limp. A huge mountain appeared from the bottom of the sea, and slowly floated into the air.

“What is going on here?”

A stunned Colbert whispered.

Saito used Derflinger to stand up.

“Wh-what is that...?”

In the far off distance... He could see a fleet the size of beans, as well as the floating pitch-black mountain.

Previously in the Fire Dragon mountain range, Saito had seen a whole mountain float into the air, but this black mountain was much larger than than the one from that time...

Just as Saito was getting confused.

“That’s the ‘Holy Land’.”

Derflinger said.

“What did you say?”

“Anyway, this is just my speculation. The so-called ‘Holy Land’, is actually a very large ‘Spirit Stone’. The Pope is probably using Void Magic to cause the power of wind that has accumulated in the ‘Holy Land’ to react.”

“The Void can do such unexpectedly ridiculous things...”, Saito couldn’t help but whisper.

No, if he were to think about it, the Void could open a “Door” to another world; trigger an enormous explosion that destroyed an entire fleet; and eliminate a Jewel of Fire without leaving a trace. It wouldn’t seem surprising if it could make a mountain float.

Previously Saito didn’t know how to send the hundreds of thousands of members of the “Coalition for the Reclamation of the Holy Land” to the bottom of the sea. This was obviously a method that he didn’t think about...

The “Lífþrasir” rune under his hooded jacket began to flicker, which may have been a reaction to the “Holy Land”.

“A little faster would be good...”

Saito told Colbert, who was standing in the same place, stunned.

“Sensei, I have to go... I have to go to the ‘Holy Land’. Of course, I could become a prisoner, and even if I rushed over there, I might not be able to do anything. But if there’s something that only I can do, then I have to do it. When I was on Earth, I couldn’t do anything because I was just a powerless high school student. But here is different, I gained the power to make a huge difference, so...”

“Mm...,” Colbert muttered with a serious expression.

Colbert seemed to waver between his role as a teacher and his role as Saito’s friend.

After a few moments of silence... Colbert spoke.

“Saito.”

“Yes?”

“Honestly, I really don’t want to let you go. Because it’s too dangerous.”

“Sensei...”

“But it seems like there’s nothing that will stop you.”

Colbert shrugged, and shouted at the kids who were on the deck.

“A few of you come help me, I need a few people.

Saito was guided to the hangar of the “Ostland”. Tabitha, Kirche, Guiche, Malicorne and the others followed him down the stairs.

“Sensei, this is...!”

Seeing the thing that was parked in the middle of the hangar, Saito couldn’t help but shout.

A large, red circular sun was painted on the body and wing.

Besides the shiny cowling, there was the character for “Dragon” in white on the bottom.

It was the “Zero Fighter”.

“With this, you can get to the ‘Holy Land’ immediately.”

Colbert stated.

“This can fly?”

“Of course, it’s already been repaired, and even the ‘gasoline’ is full. Only the machine gun still has no bullets.”

When Saito’s hand touched the Zero Fighter, the rune on his left hand lit up. The damage that the body received in the battle of Albion seemed to be repaired with “Alchemy” and “Fortification” magic.

“Thank you, Sensei...”

“It’s nothing, I thought that it would come in handy for you.”

From the wings to the instrument-filled cockpit, the Zero Fighter filled Saito with an inexplicable sense of nostalgia.

“Take these.”

Malicorne stuffed the “Weapons” of the “Holy Land” behind the pilot’s seat.

“Piling too many will increase the vehicle’s weight, this is enough.”

Saito placed a automatic pistol which looked good into his belt.

“Saito, I know that stopping you is pointless, so I want to remind you.”

Guiche coughed lightly then spoke.

“Don’t die. Absolutely, do not die. It’s stupid to die for fame, but you’ve said this before.”

“Roger.”

Saito smiled hearing this. The last time he got into an argument with Guiche about a noble’s honor...

Next it was Tabitha’s turn. Tabitha quickly climbed up to the front of the wing and kissed Saito on the cheek.

“Huh? Ehhhhhhhh?”

The sudden action surprised Saito. Tabitha immediately turned red and jumped to the ground.

“Hey, it’s not really that easy, Tabitha!”

Kirche whistled.

“ ... ”

The silent Tabitha looked away from Saito.

“I say, you have nothing to say for yourself?”

Guiche glanced at Saito.

“Tha-thank you...”

“...”

Saito finally squeeze this sentence from his throat, and Tabitha’s face became redder as she listened.

“Wooooooooow!”

“This time Malicorne made a strange sound.”

“What is the meaning of this, what does this really mean! Are you kidding! Really Saito, you’re absolutely not allowed to die. Be sure to come back to us! After you get back, I’ll use wind magic to run you over!”

Guiche and Kirche grabbed the violent Malicorne together from behind.

“You know how to use the ‘Happy Little Snakes’, right?”

“Oh, sorry, but please help me unload the weapon.”

“Is that okay?”

“Yeah, I hope that I won’t have to kill anybody, and the plane will fly faster this way.”

At the time in Tarbes there was a fight, but the current situation wasn’t a war yet. And Saito doesn’t want to use Colbert’s invention to take people’s lives.

“I understand.”

After nodding in response, Colbert expertly removed the weapon from under the wing.

“Mr. Gramont, please help me remove these locks with ‘Alchemy’.”

Under the guidance of Colbert, Guiche waved his wand. The four locks that secured the Zero Fighter were released and fell to the floor.

“Can I really take off without a runway or catapult?”

“We can use wind magic to start the propeller and generate lift. Five magicians should be sufficient.”

And so, Saito signaled with a nod of his head and began the pre-take off procedures. He switched the fuel switch to the main tank position, and set the mixing ratio lever and the propeller pitch to their correct positions. Opening the cowl flaps, he closed the lubrication cooler’s cover.

Colbert cranked the propeller with wind magic.

Waiting for the correct timing, Saito pushed the ignition button with his right hand. Pushing the throttle forward slightly, the engine started and the propeller began to spin with a rumble.

Finally, Saito checked the indicators. The rune on his left hand told Saito that everything was working properly.

“There’s nothing wrong with the aircraft.”

“Excellent, open the ‘Hangar door’!”

Colbert immediately chanted the “Unlock” spell, and the lock on the hangar door released.

The bow of the “Ostland” opened vertically, and a strong wind rushed into the ship.

Wearing the goggles of Siesta’s great-grandfather, Saito closed the canopy of the pilot’s seat.

Guiche and Malicorne helped to remove the wheel chocks.

After releasing the brakes, the plane began to move haltingly.

“Don’t tell me you’re not scared, partner?”

“Of course I’m scared.”

Saito responded.

“But if I don’t go now, I’ll probably never have the chance to see Louise again. The possibility of never seeing her smile again is even more frightening.”

Everyone raised their wand and began to chant wind magic.

The propeller rotated violently. After setting the flap to full, the propeller pitch handle was adjusted for take off. As Saito released the brakes, he opened the throttle.

In one breath, the Zero Fighter accelerated.

The moment the tail wheel left the deck, Saito pulled on the control stick.

Then the plane lightly ascended.

As the Zero fighter flew, it cut through the wind and soared into the blue sky.

Saito looked back at the “Ostland” as he was leaving the ship.

The members of the Undine Knights stood on the deck, holding their wands high.

It was a salute which the Halkeginian nobles reserved only for those deemed the most honorable.

The sun slowly began to rise from the other side of the horizon. The 80,000 soldiers of the “Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Lands” that were traveling by ship, began to land one after the other on the “Holy Land” floating in the air.

The commanders of the army gathered, including the leaders of Gaulia, Romalia, Tristain, Germania, and Albion, which was in the middle of being divided and conquered.

There were soldiers with weapons, magicians, and foreign mercenaries. There also were cannons, siege weapons, knights riding wind and fire dragons, as well as pegasi, griffons, manticores and other fantastical beasts. There were even a handful of Elven knights. These reinforcements were dispatched as a formality by the Council of Nephthys.

The soldiers that were starting to land marched straight toward the center of the “Holy Land”.

The flat place which Josette had blasted out with “Explosion”, was where the “Weapons” from Earth had drifted to.

At that place was a surprisingly huge oval “Door” that was several hundred feet wide.

On the other side of the “Door” a vague image of another world emerged, where most of the weapons had been gathered. However, the “Door” had not yet been fully opened. Looking at the world on the other side, it seemed like it was only a gleaming mirror.

Louise and several other bearers of the “Void” gathered in front of the “Door”, and prepared to chant the Founder’s Void. Albrecht the Third, Turuk, Bidashal, Henrietta, and

Siesta, who had followed Louise, stood in the distance, not too far away from everyone.

“Yet, it seems, that just about everything was too late.”

Henrietta’s voice was full of despair.

The terrible “Holy War” was about to begin... Although there was a glimmer of hope in ordering the Undine Knights to rescue Saito, in the end it was ultimately futile.

“God... Saito, Ms. Vallière...”

Siesta, standing next to Henrietta, closed her eyes and prayed.

Squinting, as he watched the sun rise above the horizon, Saito’s “Zero Fighter” cut through the strong wind as it flew.

The sun reflected off the metal wings. The cruising speed displayed on the gauge was 180 knots. With the control ability of the “Gandálfr”, there shouldn’t be a problem.

Although Saito never learned where he was flying, there was no way for him to get lost. The sea filled his field of vision, but as long as the target was the “Holy Land”, that was visible in the distance, he could fly straight there.

“Partner, you have to hold on to me tightly. It should be said that you can never let go.”

Derflinger, who was clenched in Saito’s right hand, said.

“I know.”

The “Lífprásir” rune flickered, mercilessly stealing away Saito’s life.

Without Derflinger’s help, there would be no way for Saito to be able to move on his own.

“Say, earlier you said that there were things you wanted to ask me.”

“Yeah.”

With his eyes staring at the “Holy Land”, Saito spoke.

“I dreamed a dream of 6000 years ago.”

“Yes.”

Derflinger responded simply.

“That was a tragedy.”

“Oh.”

“But there wasn’t anything that you could do, Derf. After all, it wasn’t your fault.”

“...Possibly.”

His voice was filled with sadness.

“I... had known for a long time how much Sasha like... how much she loved that blockhead, Brimir. After all, I was her “Partner” at the time. So it may be that I unconsciously put you and the pink-haired girl together with the two from those days. So after I learned that you’d become “Lífþrasir”, I was afraid that the same tragedy would be repeated. Truly, I felt very sad.”

The rambling Deflinger was much more talkative than usual.

Saito suddenly felt confused and asked.

“Derf, is that okay?”

“What is it?”

“No, isn’t it because of Sasha’s magic, that you couldn’t talk about what happened before...?”

“Oh, that... I lifted it.”

“Huh?”

“Yes, while I was sleeping, I entered an altered state of mind... and removed Sasha’s magic. It took me an awful lot of time, but I managed somehow or other.”

“No wonder you didn’t respond earlier, you were...”

At that moment, Saito pushed the control stick in his right hand.

The “Holy Land” that he had seen from afar was already in front of him.

There was no mistake, it was the wreckage of the “Great Will” that Saito saw in his dream of 6,000 years ago.

Brimir’s “Life” didn’t completely eliminate this huge spirit stone. If it can be destroyed completely, it would stop the great uprising caused by the “Wind Stones”...

“Derf, I actually thought about it earlier.”

Saito said.

“Thought what, partner?”

“There’s no way Mr. Brimir could destroy the ‘Holy Land’... in fact, it’s clear that he could complete the chant of ‘Life’, but he didn’t do it.”

After a bit, Derflinger finally responded.

“Why do you think this?”

“In the end, Mr. Brimir said that he had sinned, and that he loved Sasha... In other words, it was necessary to completely flatten the ‘Holy Land’ in order to save the ‘Magi’, but he hesitated at the last moment. Isn’t it because

there was no way he could sacrifice Sasha's life in order to launch 'Life'?"

"... That could be so."

"What's with the stuttering response, didn't you unlock the shackles Sasha put on you?"

"No, sorry, because even I'm not sure. I really don't know what thoughts were in Brimir's heart. After all, I'm just a sword."

Derflinger's tone was half-joking.

"More importantly, partner."

"What?"

"You should already be aware of it."

"Aware of what?"

"If you go on like this, you'll die."

"..."

Saito was silent for a moment.

Then he spoke in an steady tone.

"I know. So I'm not in a hurry to rush over there, yeah?"

I already knew that I was going to die.

The moment the “Lífprásir” is freed from his fate will be Saito’s death.

No matter how hard he struggles, he can’t change this fate.

No, it’s not that there is no way to be saved, but that the method is...

“For Gandálfr to kill his master.”

In the dream of 6,000 years ago, Sasha’s runes disappeared, it’s definitely because of that reason.

To die by Sasha’s sword... This was the only method that Brimir could come up with in order to save Sasha’s life.

But it was impossible for Saito to use this method.

Wanting to kill Louise with his own hand... Saito felt scared just thinking about it.

Therefore, there was no way to change his fate, Saito had already mentally prepared himself for this.

“Partner, I... have wasted away for thousands of years and seen all kinds of guys. But... this is the first time I’ve ever seen anybody like you.”

“Come on.”

Hearing this, Saito gave a wry smile.

“Also, don’t say wasted away for thousands of years. After all, we finally met each other after 6,000 years. Just like how I met Louise, it’s wonderful that I got to meet you. If being called by Louise is fate, then meeting Derf in that weapon shop must also be fate.”

“Par-partner... Wa-waaaaaaaaaaaaah~”

“Wh-what happened, Derf?!”

A startled Saito quickly asked.

“Damn, you live for 6,000 years, and you even forget how to cry.”

“Even swords cry... It’s strange to say that you’re crying.”

“No, actually I won’t cry, otherwise the sword will rust.”

“What!”

Derflinger’s answer made Saito laugh.

“Partner.”

“What?”

“I... being able to be your partner, it’s truly been great.”

“Same here, Derf.”

Oh Founder, oh Founder, ye who speaketh for our God the most divine, oh ye great Founder who guidest us.

Please grant stars to the sky. Please grant grace to us humans. Please grant us tranquility...

Facing the huge “Door” floating in the air, Louise chanted a prayer.

Tiffania, Josette, and Vittorio, the other three bearers, were stand close by, each holding a ring or secret treasure of the Founder. Julio stood between Louise and the three. As the “Mjöðvitnir”, he had the ability to resonate with the “Founder’s Treasures”.

The rune on Julio’s forehead glowed, and the Founder’s Incense Burner, the Founder’s Music Box, the Founder’s Round Mirror... and the “Founder’s Prayer Book” in Louise’s hands suddenly began emitting a dazzling light.

“Now, Ms. Vallière, please chant the ‘Life’ spell!”, Vittorio shouted at Louise.

Louise took a deep breath and raised her wand, ready to start chanting the spell.

“Wait, Louise...!”

Tiffania ran forward, trying to stop Louise.

At that moment, the Wind Ruby on Tiffania's hand shined brightly.

"Ah!"

The "Founder's Rubies" worn by the "Bearers" resonated with each other. The surrounding was filled with a high pitched ringing, and then the four rubies shattered.

There was a flash, and four beams of light rushed straight into the sky.

The light of the smashed ruby fragments coalesced into a tiny ball of light in the air.

"God, Louise..."

Tiffania shouted in a trembling voice, falling to the ground.

The final "Void" had already started, and could no longer be stopped.

Louise squinted and began to chant the Void spell.

The engine of the Zero Fighter roared, and, piloted by Saito, charged toward where a large number of ships had gathered.

There were over 100 warships in formation, and it was suicidal to charge in with a single plane.

Fortunately, in order to land on the “Holy Land” the fleet had been brought close together. Therefore, the distance between the ships was too narrow to attack the invading enemy aircraft with cannons.

“Partner, the enemy is attacking.”

“Yeah.”

Saito used one hand to switch the complex fuel system in the blink of an eye. The veteran control technique provided by “Gandálfr” made the impossible, possible.

The current speed was 240 knots. Using the superb movements of a stunt pilot, Saito drew a line through the airspace that was packed with innumerable warships and galleons. If any part of the wings touched a ship, it would shatter.

The early warning network of crow familiars caught the approach of the Zero Fighter. One squad of dragon knights on wind dragons immediately took off from a large ship.

The dragon knights cast “Air Spear” together.

The masses of compressed air poured down like a rainstorm.

“Damn!”

Saito quickly stepped on the pedal and rolled the plane to avoid the wind spears.

However, no matter how amazing the control technique of “Gandálfr” was, it was impossible to completely avoid them. After all, even the trajectory of the spear was invisible. Several air spears hit the front of the plane’s aluminum wing, causing it to lose control.

“This is a mess, partner!”

“You’re telling me!”

While being upside down, Saito stepped on the pedal and barely restored the balance of the plane. Since he had to hold Derflinger in his left hand the entire time, he had to control it with one hand.

“Partner, you alright?”

“St-still good...”

Almost biting the tip of his tongue, Saito answered reluctantly.

His vision began to blur, and his mind was a little hazy.

The “Lífprásir” rune flashed violently, and mercilessly stole Saito’s life. If he let go of Derflinger, Saito would definitely lose consciousness instantly.

“Derf, I say...”

“Huh, what’s up?”

“If it goes on like this, I’ll lose consciousness... Please inject a little more power into me.”

“Partner, can your body take it?”

“It’s fine... Anyway, we’ll get shot down if we go on like this, and then it’s over.”

“I know.”

Derflinger’s blade glowed blue.

Saito’s heart immediately thumped with a violent pulse, and power poured into his body.

“Say Derf, can you still hold on?”

“Yeah, no problem. After all, I’m a ‘Legend’.”

The response sounded relaxed.

“We’re a ‘Legend’ and a ‘Hero’, huh? There’s nothing to be afraid of.

“Yup.”

Saito, with a faint smile at the corner of his mouth, increased the speed of the plane.

The knight squad swooped at the top of the Zero Fighter that was in a steep dive.

“Four are attacking from above!”

Derflinger, seeing this, shouted.

The rune on his left hand shined, and Saito’s Zero Fighter, guided by veteran-level piloting skills, avoided the dive attack of the wind dragons. At the speed of the wind dragons, it was impossible to catch up with the staying power of an internal combustion engine.

A group of magicians lined up on the deck of a battleship fired a barrage of spells, one after the other.

Saito accelerated the plane even more, attempting to throw off all of the attacks.

At that moment, a “Fireball” burst nearby.

The impact of the explosion caused the windshield to shatter. The Zero Fighter’s windshield was originally bullet-proof glass, but it was damaged in the battle with Albion. The glass that is now installed in the windshield was made by Colbert using “Alchemy”.

The pieces of broken glass slashed Saito’s cheek, leaving a bloody scratch on his face.

“Partner, there’s a hole in the wing!”

Derflinger screamed.

“I don’t give a fuck! We’ve already got no chance but to fly!”

Saito threw the Zero Fighter’s throttle wide open.

Accelerating at full power, he ascended in an instant.

“Da-dammmmmmmmmmit!”

Saito shouted with his eyes closed.

Sorry, Mom.

I can’t keep my promise, I won’t be able to return to my mother.

But, I’ll save the Earth. I’ll do my best.

So please praise me, boast that you’re the proud mother of a son.

Please show off to everybody, that my son saved the world.

Also, I found a girlfriend, a girl named Louise.

She’s really cute, petite, her chest is small, she’s head over heels in love with me, and a little short tempered. Although she’s a bit short tempered, she the one that I love the most.

Mom, thanks for giving birth to me.

Dad, thanks for your kindness.

Farewell.

The Zero Fighter rose through the clouds and flew directly above the “Holy Land”.

Saito removed his broken goggles.

He could see a huge “Door” floating in the air.

The scene that emerged was a US military base.

They had an “F16”, like a plastic model he had built, as well as the latest “F24”. Of course the Pope would open the “Door” at the place with the greatest power on Earth.

In front of the “Door” was the figure of Louise.

Aiolu. Sunu. Feyr. Arushakusha.

Lifting her wand high, Louise began to chant the “Void” spell.

The spell’s chant was very similar to that of “Explosion”.

The so-called “Life”, used the life of the final familiar “Lífprásir” to launch an extremely large “Explosion”.

Osu. Sunu. Uriu. Ru. Raduo.

The spell that Louise chanted so many times that it had already become a part of her body.

The rhythm of the spell rose and fell repeatedly, as if it were a wave.

The great power of the “Void” filled the petite Louise. A power too great for a single person.

If her concentration wavered in the slightest, she’d be pulled into the bottomless pits of hell.

Peiozus. Uru. Svueiru. Kanuo. Oshera.

The ball of light floating in the air kept getting bigger.

The ball of light shined on the ground like a small sun.

“Just a little more, just a little more...”

While she was chanting the spell, Louise thought in her heart.

Her deep brown eyes weren’t looking at the “Door” in front of her, but the scenery of somewhere else.

Gela. Isa. Unjue. Bazaru. Beokuen. Iru.....

The spell chant finished.

But it was at best an “Explosion” spell.

For the “Founder’s Void” that stole a familiar’s life to truly be complete, the final spell words to dedicate the life of the “Lífprasir” had to be added.

“.....”

Louise squinted her eyes, and quietly lowered her wand.

“Ms. Vallière, what is it?”

Vittorio shouted.

But Louise looked directly to the sky as if she was waiting for something.

“Ms. Vallière, please hurry. Don’t you want to save his life?”

“Well, of course I do. But please wait a moment, Your Holiness.”

Louise gave a steady smile.

“Wait? What are you waiting for?”

Vittorio, who usually had a completely calm expression, showed a look of confusion for the first time.

“Waiting for my... the ‘Familiar of Zero’.”

The low rumble of an engine rang through the air.

NOTES

1. ↑ A fancy word which means the side of a ship.

CHAPTER 12:

THE CHOICE OF THE SAINTESS

“Louise!”

Saito stepped on the pedal and rolled the aircraft. He reduced the throttle to decelerate and used the hydraulic system to lower the landing gear.

In front of him was a soldier with surprised expression, and a group of magicians pointing their wands at him. “Magic Arrow”, “Fireball”, and “Air Hammer” were launched simultaneously.

“Dodge it, partner!”

“No, like hell this can be dodged!”

The magic of the magicians poured into the front of the wing like a thunderstorm. The aircraft was largely off-balance in the air and slammed towards the soldiers.

“MOVE YER ARSES—-!”

As he pulled the control stick towards him, Saito loudly shouted.

As the Zero Fighter flowed out of the black smoke, it charged into the soldiers.

The soldiers which had been in a tight formation, now scattered to the left and right like birds.

When the aircraft wheels touched the ground they immediately sparked.

Saito quickly stepped on the floor pedal to activate the hydraulic wheel brakes.

But the aircraft, whose speed hadn't been reduced enough, slid like it was on a slippery surface. The slanted wing hit the ground and was effectively torn off.

"Partner, escape quickly! The plane is breaking into pieces!"

"Don't say stupid things!"

While shouting, Saito quickly undid his seatbelt and body harness. Since it was the Zero Fighter it had no ejection device, but there was a parachute... However, there was no time to use it now.

Holding Derflinger in his hand, Saito jumped out of the sliding aircraft.

After being thrown from the aircraft, Saito rolled across the ground many times. The out of control Zero Fighter hit a

rock, violently bounced several times, and was severely damaged when it suddenly slammed into the ground.

“That hurt—-!”

Saito, who still didn’t dare let go of Derflinger, unsteadily stood up.

Looking around, he saw that he was already surrounded by Templars holding wands.

His vision was dim, and there was a limit to the power that Derflinger could grant his “Wielder”. If he didn’t rely on the magic that Derflinger accumulated, there was no way that Saito could move his body...

“You alright, partner?”

Derflinger asked.

“My vision is blurry... I can’t see the things around me clearly...”

“I’ll be your eyes, partner.”

Saito looked up, and at the end of his blurry vision was a ball of light like a small sun.

It was the light that he had seen in the rune dream.

Louise is there...

“Derf.”

“Here.”

“Can I finally reach Louise’s side?”

“If it’s you, partner, it’ll be just fine... actually, I can’t say that.”

“Come on, you’re too honest.”

Hear this, Saito laughed.

“Hey, Derf, I still don’t want to die. I can’t mentally prepare myself to die that easily, since I’m not a hero at all, just an ordinary high school student.”

“Yeah.”

“But, but...”

“But?”

“I want, to see Louise again.”

Clenching Derflinger, Saito suddenly rushed at the Templars.

As soon as he charged into the enemy, he forgot his fear. Derflinger didn’t hold anything back, and granted all the magic he had accumulated so far into Saito.

Saito charged forward to the enemy like a whirlwind. The Templars didn’t even catch sight of Saito as they were cut

down one after another.

“Don’t be afraid, there is but one enemy!”

“Protect His Holiness and the ‘Saintess’!”

A young man who appeared to be the leader of the group of knights, raised his wand and shouted.

The group of knights raised their wands to the sky, and began to chant a spell. The Romalian Templar’s pride and joy, the group chant “Hymnal Aria”.

Magic arrows were released in just one instant.

After several hundred magic arrows changed direction in the arrow, they immediately turned their heads towards Saito.

That was the same as “Fireball”, which was a magic that automatically tracked the enemy. As fast as “Gandálfr” was, he wasn’t faster than magic, but Saito waved Derflinger and absorbed the magic power. The absorbed magic power could be turned into power to drive Saito, so the more magic he absorbed, the more explosive his speed became.

“Oh, thank you very much! With this I’ll can continue to fight.”

Derflinger shouted.

“Don’t be too crazy.”

“I shall take their words and return them to you, partner.”

“Right.”

A bitter smile showed on Saito’s face. A hole opened in his shoulder, and blood spayed from it. No matter how strong he was, he could not block hundreds of magic arrows completely.

A magician riding a fire dragon followed up the attack from the air. Relying on the fire dragon’s vision, they could grasp the gale wind speed-like movements of Saito.

“Partner, up and right!”

In response to Derflinger’s words, Saito recklessly waved his sword. The throat of the fire dragon, which was about to use its breath, was torn up in an instant and enveloped in fire.

“Louise, are you there...?”

At that time, it already seemed like Saito’s eyes couldn’t see anything.

And he was constantly advancing, charging towards the small sun that was shining brightly.

“A big one is coming, right in front.”

“OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOH!”

Saito kicked the ground and accelerated.

What stood in his way before his eyes was a rock golem, three mails in height.^[1]

Saito, holding Derflinger in both hands, held his sword high and slashed in a rough manner.

Saito swept past, and it lay flat on the ground like ears of wheat after a windstorm blew through.

Those terrible tactics caused a lot of the soldiers to begin to cower.

“Still not enough, partner.”

“Yeah...”

However, the damage in his body had accumulated, making Saito’s movements gradually slow down.

In fact, Saito’s body already had numerous injuries. He’s broken several bones, and he’d already been fatally injured.

“Partner, this time it’s above, a wind dragon is coming.”

A strong wind blew from overhead. In the next moment, Saito’s body was sent flying horizontally. The wind dragon’s claws had scratched Saito’s shoulder.

“Da... mmit...!”

“Stand up quick, partner! It’s coming again!”

Saito, who stood up, immediately raised his head and glared upwards.

A wind dragon that was bigger than Sylphid, flew back after circling.

“It’s amazing, Saito. I can’t imagine you being able to escape from ‘Prison Island’.”

“Julio, it’s you!”

Saito couldn’t help but roar, hearing a familiar voice.

The wind dragon is Julio’s mount, Azuro. The wind dragon controlled by “Vindálfr”, launched a high-speed dive attack.

“Derf, what side!”

“Right... no, left? That bastard, he can freely change his actions!”

“Dammit!”

Almost instinctively, Satio rushed forward. As he passed the wind dragon, Derflinger flashed.

However, the blade only cut one of the wind dragon’s hard scales.

“Sorry, I won’t let you approach the ‘Saintess’, brother.”

Saying that, Julio pulled out the saber from his waist.

The scene of the Templars being beaten down one after another caused the Pope's guards to fall into a panic.

After all, the guards knew nothing about the true face of the enemy.

The enemy who they couldn't see at all, gradually approaching whistle of a sudden whirlwind.

But Tiffania, who was there, immediately noticed the true face of the one who approached.

"Saito's come!"

Tears appeared in her clear, dark blue eyes.

"Oh, that is the left hand of god that rivals an army. It is exactly the same as the legend."

Vittorio said.

Saito coming here was definitely outside of the Pope's expectations.

However, his expression was still mostly calm.

"Maybe even Julio can't oppose him."

"Julio..."

Josette pulled out her wand and prepared to cast the "Void" at Saito. But at the same time, Tiffania also pulled out her

wand and pointed it at the Pope and Josette.

“I won’t let you lift a hand against Saito.”

Tiffania’s voice shook.

That was already the most nerve that the gentle half-elf girl could drum up.

As soon as the Pope or Josette made any unusual moves, she was ready to chant “Decompose”.

But Vittorio’s face continued to maintain a calm expression.

“It’s alright. In any case, Ms. Vallière will choose to save her beloved Saito. Maybe she won’t make the same mistake as the Founder Brimir.”

“Look, you’ve been beaten black and blue Saito! You still want to play with me with that body covered in injuries!”

“Shut yer trap!”

Julio, cleverly controlling Azuro, repeatedly made a dive attack.

While rolling on the ground, Saito dodged the dragon claws that were aimed at him.

“So this is a wind dragon controlled by Vindálfr!”

He had fought with Julio one-on-one, but never against the power of “Vindálfr”. Although he couldn’t cast spells, he was more difficult to fight than a magician.

Julio’s saber blade slashed Saito’s cheek, drawing blood.

“Damn... Louise is right in front of me...”

Seeing Julio turn around to attack again, Saito staggered, and his body swayed.

“The next time it passes, I’ll cut off that wind dragon’s wing...!”

But Saito guessed wrong. Azuro opened his mouth and spit fire with a “Boom-” at Saito.

That fierce fire was comparable to the fire dragons of Fire Dragon Mountain.

“Woah!”

Saito quickly rolled on the ground, dodging the fire by an inch. But Julio, seeing how Saito moved, wielded his saber to attack Saito, who had lost his balance.

Saito reacted instantly, pushing away the attack with his own sword.

“Uh...”

“Partner, sorry to tell you some bad news.”

“What?”

“Actually, the power that’s letting you move is running low.”

“Is it...?”

Saito clenched his teeth as he fell to the ground.

Under his tattered coat, the “Lífprásir” runes shined violently.

“Just a little bit, just a little bit more...”

At least he barely reached the place that Louise can hear his voice...

Saito slowly advanced as Derflinger hung powerlessly.

With his back to the sun, Julio, riding on Azuro’s back, glided forward.

“Derf, I have a request of you.”

“Oh, what is it?”

“Infuse me with all of the magic power, and let me move.”

“Can you?”

“No problem.”

“Let’s go.”

With Derflinger still hanging in his left hand, Saito waited for Julio’s attack.

“What, are you giving up?”

Julio spoke in surprise, seeing this. At that moment, Derflinger injected his magic into Saito’s body in a moment, and then he immediately jumped.

“OOOOOOOOOOOOOH!”

Saito drew a perfect parabola.

“What?”

Although Julio was shocked for a moment, he immediately drove Azuro to turn. Daring to attack from the air facing a wind dragon was simply suicide.

But Saito pulled out the automatic pistol hidden on his body in the air.

The trigger was instantly pulled, the crisp sound of a shot rang, and blood sprayed from Julio’s shoulder.

Julio, who lost his balance, fell head over heels and headlong for the ground...

Azuro immediately flew after his owner.

“With that, we’re even.”

Finally, Saito’s body slammed into the ground.

The place Saito fell was a large hole sunk in the middle of the “Holy Land”.

This blind charge had already brought Saito to Louise’s side.

In his fuzzy vision, suffused with white, he faintly saw a girl with pink hair, wearing a Romalian priestess’ outfit.

Although there was no way he could see her, he could tell it was Louise.

“Louise...”

Saito, gasping for breath, barely squeezed out a sound. Louise was just a few dozen feet away, his beloved master was in front of his eyes. With this, the familiar’s heart violently moved.

Then Saito struggled to stand up. Propping himself up with Derflinger, he dragged his feet as he stepped forward. The Pope’s guardian knights pointed their wands at the stumbling Saito.

“Partner, they’re aiming at you.”

“Even if you tell me... I can’t dodge.”

At that time, Louise quickly wielded her wand and pointed it at the guards.”

“Anyone who dares to chant a spell, I’ll drop the ‘Void’ on their heads!”

Hearing Louise’s threat, the guards suddenly froze.

Then the guards looked at Vittorio, asking for instructions.

After seeing the Pope quietly shake his head, the guards lowered their wands. No one was in a rush to gamble if the threat of the “Saintess” who controlled the “Void” over their head was only giving a verbal warning.

“...Anyway, the Pope wouldn’t dare to kill me.”

What’s more, Saito, the power source, was necessary to cast ‘Life’.

With staggering steps, Saito walked towards Louise.

“Dammit, my body won’t listen to me...”

Even now, the “Lífþrasir” rune was still mercilessly draining Saito’s life, and Derflinger had little power left. If there was any distraction, he’d definitely fall on the spot.

But he still couldn’t die now. Before “Life” attacked the “Holy Land”...

Saito’s eyes could see nothing but Louise.

No one had taken action, and no one has said a word.

A wonderful silence covered the heart of the “Holy Land”.

There was only Saito advancing step by step.

It was hard to get to Louise’s side and he was immediately exhausted, falling to the ground.

“Louise.”

“Saito.”

The two called the others name at the same time. As soon as he heard Louise... The voice of his loved one, a warmth suddenly filled Saito’s chest.

“Saito, I waited for you for a long time.”

Louise said, as she wiped tears from her eyes.

“What... It seems like you knew that I would come.”

Saito, who was still on the ground, had a bitter expression.

“I had a dream.”

“Dream?”

“Yeah, Saito appeared in my dream. You told me, between the two of us... the link of master and familiar. It also said that you’d come.”

Saying that, Louise showed a shy smile.

“Really...”

The phenomenon had happened several times before. When Louise was about to die at the hands of Wardes, Louise’s vision merged with Saito’s. Also, when Louise had lost her memories due to Tiffania’s magic, they exchanged memories when they kissed.

“It looks like you’ve been waiting for me, Louise.”

“Yeah”, Louise nodded.

Saito was filled with emotion.

Right, I have to tell Louise about it...

“Louise... I have something I have to tell you.”

Saito, who was struggling to stand up, desperately squeezed his voice from his throat.

“Say, I saw the memory of the runes in a dream again... In the dream of 6,000 years ago, Mr. Brimir told me. The ‘Wind Stones’ going out of control that will lead to the destruction of Halkeginia is cause by this ‘Holy Land’... So you only have to blow up this ‘Holy Land’ with your ‘Void’, and Halkeginia will be saved...”

“Saito.”

At this time, Louise suddenly interrupted Saito's words.

"Do you remember when you and I first met?"

"...Louise?"

Hearing Louise suddenly say this, a confused expression appeared on Saito's face.

"I still remember it clearly. At the Academy's Austri Plaza, you passed through the glowing portal and appeared in front of me. At that time, I directly told Colbert-sensei, saying that I absolutely wouldn't let a commoner be my familiar. I also beat you with a whip, told you to sleep on straw, and didn't give you food... I did a lot of bad things to you."

Saying this, Louise deep brown eyes filled with tears.

"But... but you've always helped me, always protected me. When I was about to be squashed by Fouquet's Golem, or I was about to die by Wardes' hand, you always came for me. Trying to block Albion's 70,000-strong army alone, or when you clearly had the chance to return home, but you didn't hesitate to fight or get injured for my sake alone. But there was no way for me to be honest with you.

Tears flowed down Louise's cheeks.

"However, you've always been willing to stay with me, telling me that you like me. That you like this sour, tiny,

uncute me. I truly, feel so happy..."

An inexplicable uneasiness emerged in Saito's heart.

What's happening, why is Louise mentioning this now...?

"Louise, sorry, what you're saying, and what I want to say..."

"I already know."

"What?"

"I also had the same dream as Saito, a dream from 6,000 years ago."

Saito was shocked.

The "Rune Dream" where Sasha killed Brimir, Louise also saw it...?

But, no, think carefully... In fact, it wouldn't be unexpected. Previously, Saito and Louise have shared visions and memories many times.

"Then, you already know the true face of the 'Holy Land'..."

"Well, as long as you use the 'Void' to level the 'Holy Land', you can save Halkeginia."

Louise nodded, with a trembling voice.

"Well..."

“But... that isn’t enough.”

“...? What are you saying...?”

“Because, there’s... no way to save you.”

The dam holding back Louise’s tears finally broke, and they fell.

“Louise... Louise, you...”

This confused Saito. What was Louise thinking about...

“So, Saito... I thought, of the best way.”

Then, Louise began to chant the “Void” spell.

The ball of light overhead swelled, and the runes on Saito’s chest began flicker violently.

“This, is the only way to save Saito.”

The wand in Louise’s hand pointed at the “Door” to the US military base.

“... Loui... se... ah...”

The “Lífþrasir” runes consumed Saito’s life, and strengthened the power of the “Void”. Like the pain of life itself burning, Saito, in pain, can’t help but grab his chest, and roll on the ground.

“The Pope and the ‘Founder’s Prayer Book’ told me, that as long as we conquer the ‘Holy Land’ and fulfill the Founder’s desire, the power of the ‘Void’ will disappear from the world... and Saito’s life can be saved.”

The light ball of “Life” expanded further.

The breathless Saito was reluctant to say anything.

That wasn’t to save Halkeginia.

In order to save Saito’s life, Louise intended to destroy the “Earth”...

“You can’t... Loui... se... Louise...!”

Saito, tightly gripping Derflinger, struggled to stand up.

The final image of the Founder Brimir, seen in the dream of 6,000 years ago, reemerged in his mind.

He remembered before his death, the sigh filled with regret and anguish.

At this moment, in Saito’s heart, protecting the Earth became less important.

“Absolutely not like this... I’ll never let Louise taste such sorrowful pain...!”

“Stop it now—-!”

With the last of his strength, Saito pulled out Derflinger. Stepping forward, trying to stop Louise, who is casting “Life”, at that moment...

Louise dropped her wand and turned to face Saito.

“... What?”

Saito’s head suddenly went blank.

Louise turned, with a smile on her face...

Her body suddenly jumped... rushing towards Saito.

Because her action was too natural, too inconspicuous, Saito was too late to react.

The next moment, Derflinger’s blade that was held in Saito’s hand easily penetrated Louise’s chest.

“Uh... ah...”

That froze Saito on the spot.

“... This, God, ah... Ahhhhhhhh...”

With his eyes wide open, he stood there, dumbstruck.

It was hard to believe that the situation in front of him was reality.

He watched as the pure white priestess outfit Louise worn, gradually was tainted red.



“Like this, is good... with this, everything will be...”

Louise, with her face losing color, showed a strong smile.

“This way, I can save your life... Although I couldn’t fulfill the promise that we two would die together... I have realized another promise... to you, to your former world...”

Then, Louise leaned on Saito’s chest.

“Loui... se...”

“See, the ‘Door’ will disappear soon. Mo-move quickly... this is the last chance for you to return to your original world...”

“Louise...”

“Because you’re a boy, you must return to the world you were born in... but I’m a girl. Even though I couldn’t be a saintess, dying as your lover, I’m so happy...”

Louise, her face revealing a smile, said her final words.

“... I love you, Saito. I love you.”

At that moment, the power of the ‘Void’ disappeared from the world.

NOTES

1. ↑ In case you've forgotten, one mail is one metre.

CHAPTER 13:

THE END OF THE VOID

At the same time, Guiche and the other youths of the Ondine Knight Corps worriedly gazed towards the “Holy Land” where Saito flew from the deck of the “Ostland”.

“That guy, Saito will be fine.”

“Anyway, even if we stopped him, he wouldn’t listen.”

Guiche casually replied to Malicorne’s leisurely muttering.

“No matter how many times he was beaten or laid out, He still courageously faced my Valkyries. He’s an unyielding person and there’s no way he’d be made to give up. He is an extremely stubborn person.”

At this time, Colbert returned from repairing the steam system.

“What’s the situation in the ‘Holy Land’?”

“No abnormalities, the army has almost finished landing...”

Reynald, who monitored the “Holy Land” with “Farsight” magic, answered.

“Oh, really...”

It was at the same time as Colbert moved his hand toward his chin.

At the same time, Malicorne, who was also observing the “Holy Land” with “Farsight” suddenly shouted.

“H-H-H-How...!”

“What is it, Malicorne?”

Guiche wrinkled his brow.

“The situation in the ‘Holy Land’ doesn’t seem right!”

“The one that doesn’t seem right is you.”

After the noncommittal response, Kirche chanted “Farsight” magic.

She then exclaimed “Oh no.”

“What is it, Ms. Zerbst?”

“Not good! The ‘Holy Land’ is slowly falling!”

“What did you say?!”

A rumbling sound, like the sound that the earth makes, rang through the sky.

The “Holy Land”, packed with the landed army, was sizzling as if like a frying pan.

Because the “Holy Land”, that was originally floating in the air, was now slowly falling.

Dragon knights and magicians could still fly in the air, but there wasn't another way for the common soldiers. The soldiers charged towards the ships in a panic.

“The power of the ‘Void’ is lost... I didn't think this actually could happen...”

On the swaying ground, Vittorio Serevare looked to the sky and sighed.

He could clearly feel the power of the ‘Void’, granted by the Founder, gradually flowing out of his body.

The huge “Door” that was opened in the air began to slowly close...

Facing the Founder's long desired “Holy Land”, Vittorio could only stand where he was, dumbly.

There was only two ways to eliminate the power of the “Void” from this world.

The first, was to recover the “Holy Land”, and the second was...

For the ‘Gandálfr’ to kill his master with his own hand.

Where did she learn the second method?

“No, under the circumstances, that’s already unimportant...”

The self-deprecating Vittorio shook his head.

It’s was his loss. At the last moment, she lost to her love.

She had measured the life of the man she loved and Halkeginia on a scale and chose the former. She had choses to sacrifice her own life to save the young man from his fated death.

The “Holy Land” was crumbling, and big cracks appeared in the ground.

In the chaos and noise, Vittorio stared at the setting of the destroyed Ruby of Fire.

“All hope is gone. Mother, I’ll see you soon.”

After chanting the Founder’s prayer, Vittorio jumped into a crack in the ground.

Be it the ground shaking, or the all-encompassing noise, Saito didn’t hear a thing.

Still holding the bloody remains of Louise in his arms, he kept on crying and crying.

“Louise... Hey, Louise... Please open your eyes, okay!”

Louise had already stopped breathing.

The deep brown eyes that used to move so delicately could no longer open.

No smile would appear on her face which had lost its blood.

“Why... Why like this... Louise!”

Saito tightly hugged Louise, with her pink-blond hair.

Louise... My love, my favorite master.

A stubborn temperament, high self-esteem, a strong sense of justice...

The girl that told Saito that she loved him...

Drip, Drip the tears that couldn't stop, wet Louise's cheeks.

The rune on his left hand weakened and gradually disappeared.

“Don't go away... Please, don't vanish, okay...?”

Squeezing his left hand, Saito shouted.

This is the link between Louise and I...

“Damn... Isn’t this the same as 6,000 years ago...?”

If Gandálfr were to kill his master, the power of the “Void” would be wiped out.

Louise, who dreamed the same dream as Saito, knew this and tried to get Saito to kill her.

That would be the only way to save both Saito and the world of Saito’s homeland.

Even if it meant sacrificing herself and Halkeginia’s future, Louise wanted to save Saito.

Saito reached out his hand, touching the gradually cooling cheeks of Louise.

“Louise, when I was beaten by Guiche, you took care of me for three days and three nights. After that, not only did you go with me to buy a sword, you also faced Fouquet’s golem with Kirche, Tabitha and I... Also, the Ball of Frigg, was the first time you danced with me. To now, I still remember feeling my heart race seeing you wearing your formal dress.”

Saito gently combed Louise’s hair with trembling fingers.

“After that, I fought against Wardes in Albion, we worked together at the ‘Charming Fairies’ Inn, and experienced many adventures. You remember when we returned to your home, didn’t you tell me that there was a necessity for the

reward of my loyalty? At that time, I thought that you finally agreed with me. I was so very happy...”

The memories he made with Louise flashed through Saito’s mind without stopping.

A wedding ceremony held in Albion, going to the Sleipnir Dance, and the adventure with everyone to save Tabitha. The date in Romalia, reuniting with Louise when she wiped her memory, and living steadily in Des Ornières. *The time you saw me kiss the princess, causing you to leave home...*

There were happy things, fun things, sad things, and difficult things... full of memories.

When I was in Tokyo, I never thought about my life goals. I lived the boring life of going to school and eating...

Saito tightly embraced Louise’s remains.

“However, Louise. After you met me, I understood a lot of things. You followed me to somewhere different. Somewhere which wasn’t here.....”

“...to! Saito!”

Saito didn’t know where the voice calling him came from.

Looking back, he saw Siesta, Tiffania, and Henrietta desperately shouting from the other side of a large crack in the ground.

“Saito, escape quickly! If you stay there you’ll die!”

Tiffania yelled with concern.

“...”

But Saito shook his head and signaled that he was very sorry. That he would stay here, together with Louise.

Of course he understood... If he died here, he would waste all of Louise’s effort. However, living in a world without Louise had no meaning.

To go back to Earth, or the future of Halkeginia, none of it mattered.

The agreement he made with Louise before, to die together...

So at death’s door, he wanted to stay at Louise’s side.

“Tiffa, Siesta, Princess... Sorry! Say goodbye to everyone for me!”

After shouting at the three, Saito picked up Louise’s remains and stood up.

Rumble, Rumble, Rumble... The ground shook and the cracks got bigger and bigger.

Tiffania’s group continued to call Saito’s name, but finally the ground completely split apart, and the three couldn’t be

seen again.

Louise's body was very light. That tiny body had been constantly bearing the weight of the fate of the world... Thinking that, his tears could no longer be held back.

Such a tiny girl actually gambled her life, trying to save me and the Earth...

With Louise's body still in his arms, Saito slowly moved towards the crack.

Louise, my most beloved...

We have to be together forever.

Although I don't know if there's a heaven in Halkeginia...

If there is a heaven, we'll get married in heaven.

Saito looked down in the dark crevice.

"Well..."

Even if you're mentally prepared, in the moment of truth, you still hesitate.

It couldn't be that the reason he couldn't gather his courage was related to the disappearance of the "Gandálfr" rune?

"Dammit, bastard..."

Then Saito yelled, trying to hide his fear, when he suddenly discovered the body of Louise in his arms was emitting blue and white light.

“...What’s going on?”

Saito couldn’t help but frown.

The source of the light was Derflinger.

“Derf?”

“Oh, partner, don’t be a total idiot.”

At this time, Derflinger spoke.

“You can’t ruin this little lady’s intent.”

“Derf, you...”

Saito was at a total loss...

“I remembered... my final duty.”

The light of Derflinger’s blade got more and more intense.

“Final duty?”

“Well, that’s right... Say partner, I’ve always felt strange. I doubted my ability that I grant my ‘Wielder’ to act using magic power... The actual use of this kind of ability.”

“What to do with... it isn't to try and keep the familiar alive?”

“Well, I thought so at the beginning. But I was wrong. That wasn't the case at all.”

He saw Derflinger's light get brighter and brighter.

“I-I, always thought that the person who built me was Sasha.”

“You're telling me that's wrong?”

“No, it's not wrong... I didn't say that. The correct answer is that I was the creation of Sasha and Brimir, the achievement of the two working together.”

“Brimir?”

“Right, the will of both of them was injected into my body. When you think about it, the block on my memory is very much like the will of Brimir... but that doesn't matter. The main point is that just before Brimir died, it seems like he injected 'Void' magic into me.”

“And this is the ability to let Derf's 'Wielder' move?”

Hearing this, Saito asked.

“Well, that's how it is. The thing Brimir left me is the 'Void' magic to endow life. As opposed to the 'Life' intended for destruction, a different kind of 'Life' magic.”

“So what exactly are you saying, Derf...?”

When Saito said this...

Ping...

A small crack appeared on the surface of Derflinger.

“Derf?”

“Think about it, for 6,000 years, I may have lived all this time for this moment.”

Ping... Ping...

The cracks scattered across the surface gradually expand.

At the same time, the light from the blade of Derflinger gradually increased...

“Derf!”

Saito was shocked, and shouted the name of his partner.

Then Saito realized what Derflinger wanted to do.

“Derf, don’t tell me you...”

“Don’t make that face, partner.”

Derflinger’s tone was the usual one.

“I’m truly happy to be able to meet you partner. Although it’s a pity to say goodbye, but I have no regrets. After living for 6,000 years, I’ve completely fulfilled my mission. This life as a tool wasn’t lived in vain.”

“...You aren’t a tool, Derf isn’t some kind of tool!”

Saito cried as he spoke.

“You aren’t a tool... You’re my friend.”

“Well, hearing you say that makes me very happy.”

He saw the tip of Derflinger’s blade gradually crumble...

Up to now, Saito could only dumbly sit there and watch.

“Partner... Let the little lady be happy. Don’t be unfaithful again.”

“Derf...”

At that time, Saito noticed.

Louise’s fingers, which were just becoming cold, moved slightly.

“... Louise?”

“It seems to be successful...”

Derflinger’s voice was like gossamer.

“Goodbye, partner. This time is really goodbye.”

“Derf, wa-wait I, Derf...”

“I am truly happy to have met you.”

“Derf—!”

At that moment, the light shrouding Louise and Derflinger’s blade in radiance instantly shattered.

“... un, wh...”

... Louise slowly opened her eyes.

In front of her was a black-haired teenager.

Crying tears, with snot coming out his nose, and no idea what he was saying.

...It’s Saito.

Saito is shouting my name.

“What? What’s going on?”

This confused Louise. Because didn’t she just die?

In order to save Saito’s life, she chose to die by being run through by Derflinger.

Well, that's definitely right. I died at that time, without a doubt.

So, where is this? Why is Saito here?

At this time, Louise was shocked.

This can't be heaven?

Well, it must be like this, right?

It turns out that I went to heaven...

Louise understood this.

Uh, no, wait. If this is heaven...

Why is Saito here?

I'm in heaven now, I am here... so, that is, um...

After thinking for several seconds, Louise came to a conclusion.

"You, you, y-y-you, you..."

"You?"

"W-what did you do!"

Louise kicked Saito in the crotch hard.

"That hurts ever so very much——!"

Immediately afterwards, there was no mercy, Saito was kicked rolling across the ground.

“You idiot, I obviously died to save you, and you ended up following me! Idiot, you, big, idiot! W-w-waaaaaaaaaaaa!”

“W-wait! Wait a moment, calm down a bit, Louise!”

Saito, being angrily kicked by Louise, shouted.

“Y-you still dare to tell me to calm down! Y-you actually, actually did this...”

“You were resurrected.”

“...What?”

This sentence confused Louise.

After looking around, she realized this place was just the “Holy Land”.

“...You say I was resurrected?”

“Well, although it’s kinda hard to believe...”

Saito stood up and grabbed Louise’s hand.

From the palm of Saito’s hand, she really felt warmth.

“W-why? But, didn’t I, die... right?”

The uneasy Louise said.

“It was Derf that saved you.”

Saito sorrowfully said.

She saw the wreckage of Derflinger fallen at their feet.

“Derf saved me?”

“Well, He said something about his final duty... he gave his life to you.”

Then Saito told Louise Derflinger’s final words.

In order to not repeat the tragedy from 6,000 years ago, the Founder Brimir injected Life into Derflinger. Then Derflinger used that Life to bring Louise back to life...

Louise was in a daze for a bit after hearing this, finally her tears overflowed.

After collecting the wreckage of Derflinger, piece by piece, she tightly held them to her chest.

“Derf, you always, always helped us.”

“Yeah.”

“I... I also think, that you were my most important friend.”

Louise’s tears, dampened Derflinger, who had turned into ordinary broken iron.

“Derf, thank you.”

Louise whispered with her eyes closed

Saito also silently closed his eyes.

In fact, even Saito wanted to cry.

But instead of sorrow, Saito thought that they were to happily thank Derflinger.

Thank you... Thank you for resurrecting my most beloved person, Louise.

After the two mourned Derflinger for a while... the ground suddenly swayed.

“Wh-what?”

“It’s related to the power of the ‘Void’ vanishing. The spirit power guiding the ‘Holy Land’ is out of control.”

“How come...”

“Let’s go, this is the life the Derf gave you. We can’t die here.”

“Yeah.”

After collecting the fragments of Derflinger, Saito put them into his jacket pocket.

“Saito, your body is already beaten black and blue... Are you okay?”

“Well anyway, the ‘Lífþrasir’ rune has already disappeared, and I can still stand up.”

Then Saito looked around.

The Zero Fighter was destroyed a while ago. Although there were ships...

“... Basically, we need to leave the center first.”

Leading Louise by hand, Saito broke into a run.

The ground swayed violently. After all, it was still floating in the air, and the degree of shaking wasn’t comparable to an earthquake. There were large and small cracks everywhere, and Saito and Louise stumbled several times.

“The falling speed is accelerating!”

“Because the ‘Void’ has lost its power.”

When preparing to jump over a small crack in front of them, the ground at their feet suddenly collapsed.

“Ah!”

“Louise!”

Louise, with a foot stepping into mid-air, was promptly pulled back by Saito.

Their original foothold followed the collapse and fell into the ocean directly below.

“Thank you, Saito.”

Louise’s body was weak and she sat on the ground. Her feet had already reached their limit, and it seemed like Saito had no power to continue running. Although the “Lífþrasir” rune had disappeared, it still was very admirable for him to have run to there with his abused body.

The rock continued to fall, and the two of them were stranded on a small rock that had separated from the bigger rock.

“Damn, at this rate...”

The current Louise had no way to use “Flight” or “Float”, they could only wait for someone to discover them and provide assistance. However, this rock obviously couldn’t last for much longer...

“Saito, look at that...”

At this time, Louise, who turned around, pointed up.

When the “Holy Land” collapsed and gradually fell, only the huge central section glowed and gradually rose into the air.

That must be the “Spirit Stone” body known as “The Great Will”.

It was the main culprit that will trigger the mainland’s “Great Uprising” by resonating with all of the “Wind Stone” in Halkeginia.

If they couldn’t think of a way to deal with it, there would be no way to save Halkeginia...

“Ultimately, how do we deal with that...”

At this time, Saito noticed a light ball glowing in the distance overhead.

At first he thought it was the sun... but it wasn’t.

That...

“Is ‘Life’...”

Saito mumbled.

Although the light ball had shrunk, the brilliance didn’t decay. The enormous “Void” power still existed, from the life consumed by “Lífprasir”.

“Louise.”

Then Saito spoke.

“That, can you still chant?”

“That?”

Louise looked up overhead, and immediately understood Saito’s meaning.

“...I don’t know. But maybe there is value in trying.”

After answering with a serious expression, Louise pulled out her wand from her cloak.

From the the size of the light ball, it wouldn’t have the original power of “Life”.

Moreover, Louise didn’t chant the final verse of “Life”.

In other words, it was not “Life”, at most it’s just a very large “Explosion”.

But maybe it’s enough to blow up the heart of the “Holy Land”.

“I’ll try.”

After taking a deep breath, Louise raised her wand.

Saito nodded, placed his hand on Louise’s arm, and tightly hugged her body.

She felt a weak, fever-like excitement.

That excitement felt very comforting, and let Louise calm down.

As if all of the emotions flowed out her body with the sound of her chanting.

Louise committed to that feeling.

That was the final “Void” magic.

—

The most basic “Void” spell, which wasn’t even for beginners.

“Explosion.”

An expanding flash swallowed the heart of the “Holy Land”.

At the same time, the ground collapsed under their feet, and the two fell straight down...



“Success, Louise... you really saved the world.”

Seeing this, Saito spoke, with mixed feelings.

“Um... but, already...”

If things continue, it’s definitely a dead end.

The two were both mentally prepared and closed their eyes.

At that time, an unknown force suddenly picked up Saito’s body.

“Wh-what?!”

Taking a glimpse up... He saw that a large wind dragon had caught Louise and him.

“Hey, you two, you’ve done wonderfully.”

“Julio!”

Azuro, who had caught the two, was holding the exhausted Pope in his mouth.

“With this you owe me a favor, Saito.”

“What favor?!”

“Ha ha ha, hold on you two. After all, I’m no longer ‘Vindálfr’, so the flight might be a little rough.”

Azuro chirped, and flapped his wings as he flew into the sky.

Chapter 14: The Return of the Hero

It was the Saturday of the fourth week of the ninth month. Ten days had passed since the destruction of the "Holy Land".

According to the Tristain Institute of Magic, it had been officially confirmed that the abnormal growth of the "Wind Stones" had stopped. Éléonore had said that there was no need to worry about the "Wind Stones" going out of control for the next tens of thousands of years.

As they had lost the target of their advances, the "Coalition Army for the Restoration of the Holy Land" quickly lost its cohesion and set foot on their way home in confusion. The days upon days of forced marching, coupled with the unfamiliar foreign land of the expedition, led to the extreme fatigue of the Halkeginian soldiers. There were many nobles who were dissatisfied with being forced to participate in a pointless war, especially in the newly established Germania, where a large-scale insurrection broke out. Abrecht the Third was forced to return to Germania to suppress it.

Romalia quickly lost its authority, and Vittorio was ousted from his position as Pope. The Agency of Religion immediately decided to hold an election for pope, and elected a new pope.

The "Holy War" ended, and Romalia's ambitions were completely shattered.

During the national chaos when the "Agency of Religion" had lost its authority, the "Saintess" brought hope to the lost people of Halkeginia. The "Saintess" who saved the world with the Founder's "Void" was now the hope of all the people of Halkeginia....

"It's ridiculous that I'm actually a 'Saintess'. Compared to Halkeginia, I clearly chose to save Saito's life."

"What does it matter, in fact you definitely saved the Earth."

In a swaying wagon, Saito answered.

Saito and Louise had returned to Tristain the previous day, riding on the "Ostland". In order for Saito's body to recover, they had spent about a week staying in Luctiana's house in Nephthys before making their way home.

It had nearly been a month since the kidnapping by the elves from the house in Des Ornières. At Tristain's Academy of Magic, where the new semester had begun, the students held a big welcome for the heroes of Halkeginia, Saito and Louise. However, the two had only showed their faces at the school, and then went elsewhere.

The destination of the carriage was Tristain's most famous/scenic spot, Lac d'Orient.

"I'll follow my own feelings and be stubborn. If you say we saved the world, it's all thanks to Derf. If Derf didn't give me this life, there would be no way to destroy the 'Holy Land'."

Louise sadly whispered.

Saito's line of sight fell to the scattered fragments of Derflinger.

Previously he had asked Luctiana if there was a way for Derflinger to recover. But it seemed to be impossible to restore his original consciousness, even for experts of the Elven Firstborn magic "Intelligent Sword".

There was no hope for Derflinger to recover. Therefore, Saito hoped to at least place his friend in Lac d'Orient.

And he also had promised the Water Spirit that he'd return the the stolen Ring of Andvari.

The carriage borrowed from the Academy leisurely travelled down the quiet country road. The old farmers working in the field waved their hands in greeting to the carriage of a noble.

"It's not even been a year, but I really missed Lac d'Orient."

"At that time, you took that love potion, and want a bit strange."

"Really, how about you don't remind people about that?"

"S-sorry."

Saito quickly apologized.

Louise stared blankly at Saito as if asking why.

"Louise?"

"However, n-now, I'm even stranger than before."

"Err?"

What's up? Thinking this, Saito asked.

He saw Louise hit his arm, and shyly whisper in his ear.

"The current me is completely infatuated with you, even without the love potion. My heart is full of lo-love for you."

Hearing what she said, Louise's face turned even more red.

"Louise...."

The feeling of deep love for Louise continued to overflow from Saito's heart.

This, th-th-this master is too cute....

Did she actually say that she was in love with me?

For me... this wretched, ridiculous looking man, is she serious?

Didn't she call me a dog before...?

Louise's moist, dark brown eyes looked up at Saito, seeming to expect something.

Saito's reason had reached its limit. Th-th-th-this master that was bursting with cuteness, the cutest master in the world, how should I answer her? What should I say...?

I'll think about it later, thought Saito.

"Louise."

Speaking softly, Saito lifted Louise's chin.

"Uh, no, the window is still open... um... uh...."

Saito blocked Louise's mouth with a kiss, and the carriage quickly quieted down.

Not caring about the two flirting, the magic doll driver drove the carriage forward.

From the hills overlooking Lac d'Orient, the shining sun reflected off the lake, showing a dazzling emerald green. When they reached the shore of the lake, Saito shouted.

"Hello~! We've come to return the ring!"

After a bit, the surface of the lake began to shine brightly, about 30 feet off shore.

The transparent lake shook like it could move by itself, and something like an amoeba emerged. Soon after, it changed into a human appearance, like a faceless monster with only a mouth.

"Do you remember, mere human? The thing you promised me."

"Well, although there's only the setting left... this is it, right?"

Saito gave the setting of the "Ring of Andvari" to the Water Spirit.

"Oh, that's it... That is the secret treasure that I held for a time."

"Is it alright that it's only the setting?"

"I do not mind, mere human. The power of the Crystal of Water will return one day."

The body of the Water Spirit twisted, and sank into the lake.

Then, Saito arranged the cloth-wrapped pieces of Derflinger on the shore.

With Louise, he carefully sank the pieces into the lake....

When every piece of broken iron gradually disappeared to the bottom of the lake, they recalled their memories with Derf.

It didn't matter when, Saito was always with Derflinger.

Whether it was one-on-one with Wardes, stopping an out of control princess, an air battle with the Albion fleet, or charging into an army of 70,000 by himself....

These bits and pieces of memories sparkled and gradually faded like that.

"Partner, be happy with the little lady."

The final piece sank to the bottom of the lake.

"Well, Derf, watch... I'll become a man."

After closing his eyes and silently praying for a bit, Saito slowly stood up.

Then grabbed the hand of Louise, who was standing off to the side.

"Saito?"

This move puzzled Louise.

After gazing at Louise for a while, Saito took a deep breath and said.

"I say, Louise...."

"What?"

In fact, there was another reason that Saito wanted to visit Lac d'Orient.

However, that reason was a secret to Louise....

The Water Spirit was the spirit that represented the "Pledge". The vows completed on the shore of Lac d'Orient would never be broken. Saito thought that here was the most suitable place for his next move, precisely because that lake had such a legend.

"The 'Door' to return to the Earth has disappeared, and even the power of the 'Void' has vanished. Since I can't return to Earth, I think I'll just settle down in this world."

"Saito... is that really okay?"

"Well I've already decided. So...uh, so...."

With a red face, Saito began to mumble.

His heart was thumping like crazy, and throat was so dry from nerves that he could die....

Forget it, it doesn't matter! Then Saito grabbed Louise's shoulders.

"Wh-what?"

"Louise, let's get married!"

This sentence made Louise's big brown eyes show a look of incomprehension.

But shortly big tears overflowed from her eyes....

The answer from the smiling Louise was:

"I will"

On the beautiful lakeside of Lac d'Orient, Saito and Louise shared a deep kiss.

Seven days later... The Friday of the first week of the tenth month.

The wedding between Saito and Louise, as per the expectations of the involved parties, was held in Austri Plaza at Tristain's Academy of Magic, where Louise originally summoned Saito.

Through the window, the visitors could be seen gathering one after the other.

In her dormitory room, Louise put on her dress with the help of Siesta.

According to the customs of the nobility, the wedding dress is pure white.

"Is it better to put something on your chest?"

Looking down at her flat chest, Louise sighed.

"Don't worry. The dress is perfect for you, Ms. Vallière."

As she was tightening the lace of the corset, Siesta replied.

"Re-really?"

"Yes. It is sure to capture Saito's heart."

Saying that, Siesta smiled.

"Ms. Vallière's chest is like my hometown, the plains of Tarbes."

"Siesta, you've also learned to say such clever flattery."

Louise was very happy hearing this. Although she didn't know much about Tarbes in the countryside, it was a place that definitely was beautiful.

"But luckily, your family approved."

"It's alright, though it took a lot of work."

When she remembered reporting her marriage to her family, Louise couldn't help but hold her head.

The day after he proposed, Saito and Louise returned to Louise's home, the land of Duke Vallière. In order to get permission for the two to marry, she tried to convince her parents. However, Duke La Vallière refused to agree.

Saito was also beaten by the Duke in the courtyard of the mansion. Saito, who had lost the power of Gandálfr was almost hanged.

But unexpectedly, the one in favor of the two getting married actually was Éléonore.

Éléonore said that Saito wasn't a commoner, but a true aristocrat with a title. He also being the hero that saved Halkeginia finally convinced the Duke.

Since the return from the "Holy Land", Henrietta officially awarded Saito the title of Viscount, and it had a great influence. This was unprecedented success for a commoner. It should be said that in the history of Tristain, no one had ever entered the nobility in such a way. Therefore, it wasn't easy, but thanks to Éléonore and Cattleya, the Duke agreed.

"Oh, it's really hard being a noble."

"If father didn't agree, I originally planned to run away with Saito."

Louise said.

"When the time comes, take me with you."

"How is that possible?"

"Impulsive."

"You...."

This made it so Louise couldn't help but glare at Siesta.

"But, you must follow the agreement."

"Agreement?"

"The agreement to lend me Saito for three days a week."

"What nonsense, it was two days, two days."

"Oh, two days is alright."

"What? N-no, it's not alright!"

At this time, Grandma Helen entered the room.

"Are you ready? Everyone is waiting."

Saito, in his wedding clothes, waited for his bride Louise in front of the emblem of the Founder Brimir.

Austri Plaza was a sea of blooming flowers, made by the earth magic instructor, and magical fireworks were displayed by Colbert.

Even Queen Henrietta was attending the wedding. Because it was a requirement for high-level aristocratic weddings, the opportunity to see the Queen was available, and so the students of the academy were very happy.

"Really, why are you officiating, you no-good priest."

Saito lowered his voice and spoke to Julio, who stood in front of the Brimir's emblem.

"Don't say that, and let me bless your lucky day."

Julio answered without blushing.

"Really, I don't get you...."

Since Julio saved his life in the end, it was difficult to refuse.

"It doesn't matter what you say, your plans have gone up in smoke."

"Anyway, looking at the results, Halkeginia was saved. At present, that's good enough."

"Please, exactly how much trouble do you think you've caused...."

Saito, who originally wanted to retort, chose silence in the end.

In the end, whether it was him or the Pope, the point was that Halkeginia is unchanged. Also, the day in question was still a big day....

"I won't say I forgive you, but I have forgotten about it for the time being."

A bell rang, and Duke La Vallière appeared in the square leading Louise by the hand.

Seeing this, Saito couldn't help but hold his breath.

Louise, in a pure white dress, was as beautiful as a fairy.

"Louise, you're beautiful."

"Thank you. You too, Saito."

The smile on Louise's face was like an angel's.

The two exchanged an oath with each other, then kissed as the crowd watched.

The sound of applause and blessings went on without end.



Walking in the square where the petals dance like snow,
Saito put his hand to his chest.

"You also blessed me, Derf."

Derflinger's blade was under his clothes.

Just this one, I'll hold on to as a keepsake.

At the successful conclusion of the wedding ceremony, the
grand wedding banquet began.

Headmaster Osman stood at the head of the square, and
the guests burst out in applause.

"Ah~, Today is a day of celebration for these two, Ms.
Vallière and Chévalier Saito. I truly wish you the best, and
this is a thing to celebrate."

After looking around the square, Headmaster Osman
nodded as if to agree.

"In this 'Holy War', these two joined hands to save the world.
Saving the world means saving all the women's buttocks in
the world. If these two hadn't been there, this old man
would no longer be able to appreciate women's hips...."

"Old man Osman, you're almost alright...."

Colbert, who could read the situation of the venue, lowered
his voice to speak.

"Err, Really?"

So Headmaster Osman held up his wine glass and shouted.

"Ah~, In short, today is the day we celebrate the 'Hero' and the 'Saintess' who saved the world. Even though everyone is going to eat and drink their fill, make sure to bless these two newlyweds!"

"Cheeeeeeeeeeeeeeeers!"

Finally, a great cheer rang from the venue, and the wedding banquet began.

Wine barrels were set in the center of the square, and old man Marteau, the head chef of the academy, displayed the luxurious dishes he made on the dining tables. Because of a shortage of workers at the academy, Jessica and the others from the "Charming Fairies" Inn came to help serve the guests.

All of the youths of the Ondine Knights were drunk on the high-quality wine. It's no wonder since for their effort this time, Queen Henrietta gave every one of them 5,000 écu, as well as the Medal of St. Brimir, Tristain's highest award. Guiche, Malicorne, Gimli, Reynald, Adrien, Arsène, Gaston, Valentin, Victor, Paul, Ernest, Oscar, Casimir... All of the members became celebrities overnight.

All the girls of the "Charming Fairies" Inn surrounded the young men.

"Oh, today you get the special treatment for free, cuties."

Now, the young men of the Ondine Knights were all the brave heroes of the rescue operation. They became targets of affections for not only the girls of the academy, but even for the girls of Tristain.

As the young men were immersed in a pleasant atmosphere, the sound of a rough voice spread.

"Uh-huh, these guys are great, eat whatever you want."

"Uhh!"

The manager Scarron showed up, making Gimli and the others spit out the wine they had just drank.

Seeing the appearance of his partners, Guiche sipped his wine a little at a time.

"S-say, Montmorency."

"What?"

Montmorency had been in a bad mood the entire time. The reason she was unhappy was that even with Guiche's bad behaviour, he was unexpectedly popular with the girls.

"Err, u-us too, don't you think, that we should do it soon?"

"...What?"

This sentence shocked Montmorency.

"I-I'm also a legitimate knight. So, err, a marriage, with, me...?"

"...Mar-marriage? What? What?"

What do I do... he actually proposed to me?

Montmorency covered her mouth.

Although she felt it was too early, even Louise was married. And Guiche wasn't the same as he was. The present Guiche truly was a knight of the queen.

"Gui-Guiche, I also...."

"Oh, look Guiche, the 'Charming Fairies' Inn has extremely cute girls."

"Wh-what, really!?"

Guiche couldn't help but turn his head.

An angry Montmorency stomped on Guiche's shoe.

"They're already totally drunk."

"Really embarrassing...."

At this time, Saito and Louise came to the table of her two older sisters to toast.

"Hm, the clothes make the man."

Éléonore ruthlessly glared at Saito, eyeing him from head to foot.

"Be-before was really embarrassing...."

Seeing Saito trembling, with his head bowed, Éléonore snorted and relented.

Presently Éléonore was in a bad mood. Because Malicorne, by an unfortunate coincidence, caught the bouquet that Louise had thrown to Éléonore. The stunned Éléonore

screamed at Malicorne and stomped on him a bunch. Since Malicorne had a happy face... he probably deliberately caught it to get abused.

"Louise, you look great in your dress."

Cattleya smiled.

She's still beautiful, thought Saito.

"Thank you, big sister."

"Your outfit fits you perfectly."

Cattleya had a little smile as she spoke.

"Th-thank you...."

This made Saito scratch his head shyly.

"Having said that, Are you doing alright, Ms. Cattleya?"

"Well, thanks to the medicine you brought."

Cattleya once suffered from a hard to treat disease that even magic couldn't cure. After Luctiana heard this, she brought a secret elf medicine, made by her uncle Bidashal, as a gift. The effect of the elf's medicine was certainly outstanding, and they could see Cattleya's condition improving day by day.

Then Cattleya gazed into Saito's eyes.

"Hey, do you still remember what it takes to be a noble?"

"Yeah."

Saito nodded. He heard this from Cattleya before.

He knew that using magic wasn't needed to be a noble.

"There is only one condition to be a noble, and that is to risk your life in protecting the princess, nothing more."

This is what Cattleya said to Saito.

"You are, without a doubt, a noble."

Cattleya gently smiled as she said this. Seeing this, Saito almost burst into tears. Being recognized as family by her was the thing that Saito was happiest about.

"Little Louise, I'm really mad you actually got married before me."

"Ouch, Ouch, big sister, it hurts...."

Éléonore grabbed Louise's ear.

Seeing the sisters getting along so well, an indescribable loneliness filled Saito's heart.

"What's wrong, Saito?"

"Oh, it's nothing."

Hearing Louise's question, Saito shook his head.

"Saying that, what about the Duke?"

"Father is there."

Then Éléonore pointed to a table in the corner of the square.

He saw a table with three drunk men endlessly rambling, and Louise's mother, Karin, busily taking care of the drunk Duke La Vallière.

"I hear they're former members of the royal magic guard."

While everyone was enjoying the wine and food, Tabitha was reading in the shade of a tree.

"Shorty, I brought you cake, chirp chirp."

"...."

Tabitha brought a bite of the Sylphid's cake to her mouth.

Then she returned her eyes to her book again.

"What are you reading now, chirp?"

Sylphid looked at Tabitha's book. The book Tabitha was reading was currently the most popular political science book in the city of Tristain.

In fact, a few days ago, a dispute broke out in her homeland of Gaulia. Unexpectedly, Queen Josette initiated action to return the crown in order to stay with Julio.

This caused the palace to fall into chaos, and they even asked Tabitha for help. Tabitha was initially confused, but ultimately agreed after the old minister who'd served for many years pleaded with her, and so she would wear the Gaulian crown again. Of course, the fact that Josette and

Tabitha had swapped was only known to a small number of people, so at present, it hasn't caused any problems....

At this time, Kirche came next to Tabitha.

She saw Kirche with a mischievous smile, as Kirche whispered in her friend's ear.

"Oh, is it really okay? If you don't say it now, you won't have a chance."

Tabitha looked up, and looked away from her book at the happy face of Saito and Louise. Seeing those two, Tabitha smiled.

"... It's alright. As long as they're happy, is the thing that I'm most happy about."

Kirche's eyes went wide hearing this answer. As Tabitha gazed at the two, a cheerful smile was on her face, a look that Kirche had never seen from her good friend.

"Tiffa, are you happy?"

"Yes, very happy. Congratulation on your marriage, Saito."

Saito greeted Tiffania, who was in the corner of the square, and Tiffania happily blessed the two's marriage.

Then the two chatted for a bit about life there, talking with Fatima, and other daily trivialities.

It seemed that Fatima had returned to "Eumenes" and was once again living with her tribe. Although it would be hard to

fill the gap, Saito hoped that one day the feelings of the two would be so that they felt like sisters.

"Having said that, this dress is really uncomfortable to wear."

Tiffania couldn't help but smile wryly as she picked up the dress. Compared with the loose clothes of the elves, the accessories like the high heels and corsets were really uncomfortable to wear.

Especially... around her chest. With her breasts, which were as large as cantaloupes, it seemed like she was about to pop out of her clothes.

Since they couldn't find a dress that could fit Tiffania's chest size on hand, they borrowed one from her cousin, Henrietta. Henrietta's chest was quite large, but because Tiffania's chest was magically huge....

"What is it, Saito?"

Tiffania looked puzzled.

"Oh. nothing...."

The moment when Saito hurriedly looked away, something happened.

With the sound of a "Pop!" the chest part of the dress flew off.

Leading to Tiffania's plump chest being exposed to Saito without hesitation.

"No!"

Hearing Tiffania's scream, the young men of the Ondine Knights, who weren't far away, turned their heads as one.

"Oh, Tiffa, this is bad!"

Saito quickly hugged Tiffania's shoulders, trying to protect her.

But he miscalculated to results. Because Tiffania was wear high heels that she wasn't used to, she lost her balance. And her quality chest squashed Saito.

BOINK*

"So-sorry, Saito!"

A scared Tiffania apologized with tears in her eyes.

Being crushed between those squashed breasts sent Saito over the moon.

At that time, a quiet, storm-like rage spread over Saito's head.

"Yo-you, yo-yo-you... What are you doing?"

Jerkily raising his head to look... he saw Louise with the face of an evil spirit.

"To-today is de-definitely my wedding day... is m-my we-we-wedding ceremony...."

"Wait Louise, this is an accident!"

"Yo-you, y-y-you stupid dogByggghandel (talk)!"

An angry Louise brandished her wand.

An attack shot out of the tip of her wand hit the ground sending Saito flying.

"Huh? What?"

Seeing this stunned Louise.

"Wasn't that 'Air Hammer' just now?"

"Louise, you've awoken to wind magic! The same system as me!"

Duchess La Vallière rushed over and praised her in amazement.

Unexpectedly, Louise, who had lost the power of the Void, actually learned systemic magic.

At this time, someone was watching the lively and extraordinary wedding scene from the top of the Academy of Magic.

"The bride is really beautiful, Brother Bleu."

"Not bad."

The two were Bleu and Jeanette of the "Elemental Brothers". Of course, these two weren't invited to the wedding, so they were crashing the wedding. This kind of thing was a trivial matter to the two.

"Shortly, this could be the last time I see the human world... it's a little lonely."

Jeanette lightly smiled. A small fang poked out from the corner of her mouth.

The true face of the "Elemental Brothers" were human-vampire hybrids created in a magic experiment conducted by the Institute of Magic. The two constantly tried to raise funds for their dream of establishing a country for vampires in Halkeginia. After receiving payment from Romalia a few days ago, their goal of founding a country had finally come to fruition.

Looking at the happy Saito, Bleu snorted.

"Although I want to go a round with Hirigale Saite... that wouldn't be very tactful."

"Let's go, Brother Damien is waiting for us."

After silently jumping outside of the wall, the two rode horses they took from the visiting guests and urged them to the east....

At the same time, two horses galloped on the road leaving the Academy of Magic.

The two were Wardes and Fouquet, who had left the wedding ceremony a little earlier.

Although Fouquet was formally invited, she only took a look at Tiffania and left the square. Fouquet thought that a thief like her wasn't suitable for such a gorgeous scene.

"Is it alright to leave the half-elf girl?"

Wardes said from horseback.

"That girl is already self-reliant, and doesn't need my help."

Fouquet showed a lonely smile.

"Speaking of you, don't you and that brat have a fight to finish?"

"My opponent isn't the legendary 'Gandálfr', so the duel is meaningless."

"Well, men are trouble, in many senses."

After her grumbling, Fouquet looked back at the buildings of the Academy of Magic.

"You have to be strong, Tiffania. Don't follow the same path as me."

The wedding banquet festivities continued. The most interesting highlight of the day was the performance of "The Hero Hirigiel Saitome and the Saintess Louise" by the Tanialiege Theater, specially hired by the royal family and Henrietta to bless the couple. Then there was the the air show by René Vonke and the other Dragon Knights, as well as Mr. Colbert's happy invention exhibition... During the exhibit, a dragon-shaped invention almost started a fire when it shot a fireball.

After that, Guiche showed the statues of the "Hero" and the "Saintess" made out of earth.

For the statues, the first to complain was Louise. Louise said that her chest wasn't that small. However, Siesta evaluation

was "exactly like the person"; Kirche said that it was totally, "Louise the Zero"; Saito rated it as quite realistic. Hearing this, Louise burst into anger, and ordered Guiche to redo it....

At this time, Henrietta overlooked the action in the square through a window of the Academy.

"29 wins, 25 losses, and 2 draws... Right, Louise?"

With a lonely smile, she gently held her hands to her chest.

Seeing Saito's innocent smile, there was a bittersweet pain in her heart.

But she knew there was no way that her wish would come true.

Goodbye, my knight, the one that I love....

"I pray you love each other forever...."

After she whispered this, Henrietta buried the faint love deep in the depths of her heart.

As a queen, Henrietta had many problems to face. That included the decline in national power squandered in fighting a war, nobles rebelling, etc. The problems have all piled up.

At that time, the voice of the Captain of the Musketeers came from outside the room.

"Your Majesty, there's an urgent matter I need to tell you."

"What is it, Agnès?"

"A messenger from the Pope arrived."

"What did you say?"

At dusk, Henrietta found Saito and Louise and guided the two to the VIP room of the Academy of Magic.

"Princess, what is it that you needed to tell us in private?"

After Louise asked, Henrietta handed an old wooden box to the two.

"Actually, just now, someone who claimed to be the messenger of the Pope gave me this thing."

"The Pope?"

Saito and Louise couldn't help but look at each other.

It seems that Vittorio's messenger, Michaela, a nun who served by him, was entrusted with this box to give to Saito.

After opening the lid, there was an old mirror inside.

"Isn't this the 'Founder's Round Mirror'!"

This made Louise's eyes open wide in surprise.

Inside the box was one of the secret treasures of the Founder, the "Founder's Round Mirror".

Why was the Romalian national treasure that has been inherited by the Pope throughout history here?

And why did he give it to Saito...?

"Excuse me... why did you give this to me?"

Saito asked in confusion.

After hesitating for a bit, Henrietta spoke.

"The 'Founder's Round Mirror' is a 'Magic Tool' that the Founder Brimir used to seal 'Void' magic. It is said that you only need to use its power and you can open a 'Door' that a single person can use.

"What did you say!"

Saito couldn't help but shout.

"Why would he give me this ting...?"

"I also don't understand the true intent of the Pope. But this may be a way for the Pope to repay Saito for the Pope's misdeeds."

"...."

This reminded Saito of Vittorio.

The consistent drive force for the Pope had always been to save Halkeginia. In this sense, it can be said that he was truly a good man. After he had failed to conquer the Earth, he could have desired to apologize in some way for how he'd used Saito up to now.

"Does that mean... that I can go back to Earth if I use this mirror?"

"Yes."

"Saito...."

Louise had an uneasy look and stared at the pale-faced Saito.

"...Please, how did it end up like this?"

He had just made up his mind to settle in this world....

And he'd already married Louise....

All sorts of emotional turmoil ripped through Saito's heart.

"I'm sorry, I'm really confused right now... Please let me think about it for a bit."

Saito responded with a green face.

"Yes, of course."

Henrietta quietly nodded her head.

"However, the power of the 'Void' has disappeared, and the 'Founder's Round Mirror' seems to be gradually losing power, so there is little time left."

Saito absently muttered to himself as he held the round mirror in his hands.

"What... in the end what do I want to do...?"

First Saito returned to Louise's room and crashed on the bed.

Basically, he thought quietly by himself about what he wanted to do in the future.

Louise was also considerate of Saito's mood.

On the day of a celebration, partying through the night seemed to be a tradition of Tristain's nobles, and you could still hear the lively wedding banquet outside. The sound of the Ondine Knights' tone-deaf singing rang under the sunset sky.

Louise's room truly made Saito feel nostalgic. At the beginning, when he was summoned as a familiar by Louise, he was treated as a dog... and slept on straw. And he was also forced to help Louise change clothes or clean underwear. Although it was hard to imagine now... It should be said that one day, he unexpectedly could marry his master.

After taking of his wedding clothes, Saito put on his usual jacket.

He was much more calm wearing this.

Saito, sitting on a chair, fell into contemplation in the room filled with moonlight.

What is he going to do moving forward... return to Earth, or....

There is only one chance to go back, and here isn't much time left.

Originally he planned to grow old in Halkeginia, and suddenly faced with this option, violently shook Saito's heart.

"Seriously, what should I do...?"

This world has Louise.

As well as good friends and good partners.

To leave Louise, and return to Earth Alone? How could he do that?

Because we're married, we vowed to stay together forever....

Stay here, Saito thought.

That's right. I won't return to Earth, I want to settle in Halkeginia with Louise.

Saito finally made up his mind and stood up.

"...."

Then he fell directly on the bed. The twin moons outside the window looked down on him.

Mother... and father, are worried about me now....

We haven't seen each other for more than a year and a half, but they definitely think about me every day. Believing that their son would come home one day, and mother who continued to send emails everyday, and preparing the hamburger that I like to eat, and waiting for me to come home....

Is Saito still alive?

That is the most worrying thing.

Nothing else is important.

No matter what you're doing now, it doesn't matter.

Just show your face.

The mail his mother sent has been read countless times, and he even knew it by heart.

With no effort, it reminds me of my book reading mother, and my taciturn office worker father.

An ordinary family that could see anywhere.

".....uh, wah, uh..... uh, waaaah."

Lying on the bed, Saito couldn't help but cry.

What should I do? Once the option to "Go Home" has a chance to come true, he immediately felt a strong homesickness.

It could also be because he had lost the 'Gandálfr' runes.

He was no longer the legendary familiar, and had returned to being an ordinary high school student.

"Waaaah, Mom, Dad, uuuuh."

Lying on Louise's bed, Saito couldn't stop crying.

"Saito...."

Louise, who had come to the room's door, stopped when she heard the sound of Saito's crying.

Just like this, Louise understood everything.

She grew up with the love of her parents, Cattleya, and Éléonore. Although strict, she loved her family the most... If she was forced to be separated from my family, and if she never would see them again, what exactly would she do?

Just imagining it, the sadness seemed like it would overwhelm her heart.

Of course she didn't want Saito to go back... but....

After quietly opening the door, Louise came to the side of the bawling Saito.

"Louise...."

Saito quickly got up from the bed and wiped his eyes.

"It's okay. When boys want to cry, there's nothing to be shy about."

Louise warmly embraced Saito's head.

"Louise, I... I...."

"I promised you, I'd let you return to your original world."

She replied to Saito's words.

"Saito should return to his family's side. Return to your mother and father."

"But... But, I...."

Saito's shoulders trembled in agitation.

"I don't want to leave Louise, to leave you... We just got married...."

"I also don't want to."

"Louise...."

"But you have to go back. For the reason, I won't hesitate to sacrifice my life."

Louise also started to cry.

"I will continue to love you, and will never love another."

Me too, you are the only one I'll ever love."

The two held each other tightly.

"Um, Saito... there's something I'd like to ask of you."

Saying this, Louise slowly got up from the bed.

"Didn't you say before? I ha-have to wait until we got married."

"What...."

"I want to ma-make memories... with Saito."

"Memories?"

Saito asked.

"What I mean by memories, is... a connection...."

At that moment, Saito held his breath.

Because Louise took off her pure white dress and dropped it on the floor.

The dress made a sound as it slipped to her feet.

The moonlight fell on Louise's body, in just her underwear.



"Lo-Lo, Lo-Louise!"

Wh-wh, wh-what are you doing... Saito couldn't help but panic.

Louise shyly covered the slight rise of her chest.

"Ah, uh...."

His heart was beating like crazy, as if it would burst, almost like he would die.

However, he couldn't look away from Louise.

"Sa-say something...."

"You're beautiful."

"That's all?"

"Be-because, I... err...."

Under the moonlight, Louise's body was as beautiful as a goddess... seeing this, Saito's mouth was dry.

Every delusion that had ever come to Saito's mind was completely swept away. A shy Louise pulled on Saito's clothes.

"You too."

"Oh, yeah...."

Saito took off his jacket and pants, as well as his underwear.

Then the two embraced each other in the very shape that they had been born in.

Saito gently touched Louise's petite chest.

"S-so embarrassing...."

This made Louise blush in shame.

Louise's skin was smooth, warm, and very firm.

Feeling the one he loves, the warmth of his beloved Louise.

I have lived for this moment, Saito thought deep in his heart.

"Gen-gently... hm."

"Alright."

After pulling Louise down on the bed, Saito traced Louise's lips, and gave her a deep kiss.

The two were in bed, looking at each other's bodies. Just quietly embracing each other and feeling the other's warmth, and made them feel like the happiest people in the world.

"Oh, Saito...."

"Yes?"

Louise, in Saito's arms, showed a happy smile.

"I have lived for this moment."

"Yeah, me too...."

Saying this, Saito gently touched Louise's pink-blond hair.

Louise kissed Saito's neck in return.

"I really hope that this could last forever...."

"But, it's impossible."

Saito said as he gazed at the twin moons hanging outside the window.

"I'll have to say goodbye to everyone."

"That's right...."

Even after it had become late at night, the wedding banquet continued in the square. Almost all of the students had returned to the dormitory, but the drunken Online Knights were all lying in the square.

Hearing that Saito had something important to put out, the guys gathered in front of the symbol of Brimir.

Just as everyone was guessing and speculating, Saito suddenly spoke.

"Tomorrow, I'll be returning to my original world!"

"No way-----!"

This shocking statement made everybody in the shout.

Just like that, the wedding banquet instantly became of farewell party for Saito.

Late night. Half the night had passed, and almost all of the food and wine was gone.

Saito and the others sat around a campfire-like magic flame, while eating eating a hot pot made by Siesta from the remaining materials, while drinking with his friends.

"Saito, ev-even though at first I thought you were an arrogant commoner. But... but now I think, you are my most important friend...."

"Come on, you're too drunk, Guiche."

Saito smiled as he patted Guiche's shoulder.

"So your glass is dry! It's your last night, so please enjoy yourself!"

"Yeah, after I return to Earth, I won't be able to drink this wine."

"What are you saying?"

"I can't, I'm not an adult yet."

"Oh... Although I don't really understand, ultimately drink first then tell me again Saito."

Saito, who was hugging the shoulders of Guiche and the others, sang a song in a loudly.

They sang "Long Live Tristain", the only song Saito knew how to sing.

The memories he made with the guys in the Ondine Knights, he wouldn't run out even if they talked for three days and three nights. Rescuing Tabitha in Alhambra. Peeking on the girls in the bath house, the single combat with the Gallian knight at the Lilion River... As everyone was there laughing, Guiche's feeling may have overflowed, and he began to cry.

"Really, men are dumb."

Montmorency rolled her eyes.

"Louise, was it really alright to marry that kind of person?"

"Well, it doesn't matter, because I love him the most."

Louise absentmindedly gazed at Saito.

Seeing Louise's reaction, Malicorne muttered, as he looked at the two.

"Saito, you, don't tell me...."

"Wh-what is it?"

"It can't be, you became adults?"

"Ex-excuse me, what are you talking about...?"

Saito and Louise suddenly blushed.

Seeing Saito's reaction, the guys began to discuss excitedly.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAHHHH, AAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHH!"

Malicorne shouted twice.

"So, how was it? Hey!"

"Y-you felt her sm-small lemon chest?"

"St-stop it, Louise is embarrassed."

Saito couldn't help but stand up to protect Louise. That made Louise's heart beat faster.

"Hey, come on, show us!"

"Let us see the evidence that you've become an adult."

The guys rushed Saito and tried to take off his clothes.

Everyone was already a drunken mess.

"Haven't you guys made enough noise!"

An angry Louise blew the guys away with wind magic. Although she had only awoken to wind magic a little while ago, she was the daughter of Karin, the "Heavy Wind", and so she had considerable power.

The guys couldn't help but tremble. Everyone thought that this was more terrifying than the old "Louise the Zero".

"Saito---! I also want, I also want to make a night of memories with you!"

"What are you talking about, Siesta!"

Siesta was so drunk that it was bad, so Saito quickly persuaded her.

"I refuse, I refuse. So please take me to Saito's world."

"That's not okay, only one can pass through the door, and Siesta's father is still here."

"Waaaaah... waaaaah... Saito, Saito, you idiot, I hate you, waaaaah...."

She was really pitiful.

Siesta who had always treated Saito tenderly....

I remember she once reprimanded me severely.

"Come, cry on my chest."

Louise stroked Siesta's head.

"Waaaaaaah... Washboard."

"Wh-wha, wh-what did you say!?"

An angry Louise chased Siesta around.

The space the Siesta left changed to Tabitha this time.

Saito saw Tabitha silently clutching his cloak.

"Ta-Tabitha?"

"... Please, let me do this."

"Haa, okay..."

A shy Saito scratched his cheek.

At that time, Colbert and Kirche came over. Looking at Tabitha, Kirche grinned and poked her friend Tabitha's shoulder.

"What, so energetic."

Tabitha instantly blushed.

"Saito, it's a pity that you can only return this one time. If there was a chance, I also wanted to see your homeland, a world without 'Magic'."

"It would be nice if you could send a letter of something."

"Well if you sent me the machine called a 'Laptop' it would be fine. However, if you want to be able to use it, you still have to open a 'Door'."

Colbert thought as he looked up to the sky. This teacher may actually invent a device to open a "Door" in the future, thought Saito.

"Saito...."

Tiffania also sat beside Saito. Tiffania under the moonlight, her golden hair shining, was as beautiful as a fairy.

"I will always remember our adventure in the Kingdom of the Elves, forever and ever. I will never forget."

"Yes, me too. Forever... I will always remember it."

Everybody chatted about the adventures in Halkeginia, and talked all night. Although some people urged Saito to stay, he finally got everybody to understand. Louise, who would miss him more than anybody, had already agreed, so of course nobody else could say anything.

"It's been my pleasure to have met you all. Truly, thank you everybody."

Saito cried as he bid farewell to everyone who he had met in this world.

Epilogue

The night had ended, and the day had begun. Beginning with Henrietta and Osmond, the Headmaster, all of the pupils and teachers of the Academy had assembled.

"That was the authentic, last "Void", you know?"

Louise spoke.

"Yeah..."

Saito thought back on everyone.

Siesta, who had cried so much, had seen them off with a smile resembling the sun.

Louise had chanted the rune which had emerged from the round mirror.

And, similar to the time when Saito had been summoned in the beginning, a "Gate" where a person was able to pass through, had appeared before their eyes.

The destination of the sparkling "Gate", should have been the very place where Saito wanted to return the most to.

He had thought that he was to bring home some things in commemoration, but stopped.

He could always remember the adventures in Halkeginia.

He had decided to only bring back Louise's beautiful pink-blond hair, and Derf's sword guard.

"Louise, I love you."

"Me too."

Saito kissed her.

Louise smiled as if she were shy.

"Don't forget me..., because you were my familiar."

"Yes, I'll always be your familiar."

What he remembered were the days in Halkeginia, filled with love and adventure, which had begun ever since that first kiss.

He had experienced a lot ever since he had been summoned as a familiar.

The first time he had met Louise, he had been treated like a dog, and thought that she was an unsociable, unpleasant person. And, they had often quarreled, but now she was a lover to him.

Slowly parting her hands, Louise sunk down behind him.

Farewell, Halkeginia...

Farewell, Louise...

The girl who I love.

Saito walked into the gate of light.

His body was engulfed by the light...

"Wait!"

"Yes?"

Saito, who had entered the "Gate" halfway, unwittingly spoke.

Large tears overflowed from Louise's reddish-brown eyes and spilled down onto her cheeks.

"Louise...?"

"Hey, take me with you too!"

"WHAAAAAAT?"

Aiming at Saito, Louise started running.

"Wa, wait, please wait, Miss Vallière!"

Siesta shouted. Everyone else had surprised expressions on their faces.

"I, hey, won't like it if I'm not with Saito!"

"Y, you, that 'Gate' is only for one..."

At that time, a voice spoke in Saito's head.

"Partner, if it's only one person I'll do something. Take the young girl with you."



Wh, what? What's this voice?

I have no idea what it is, but I'll need to do it!

"Come, Louise!"

"Saito!"

Extending both of his hands, he embraced Louise's body.

"Hey, wait, Miss Vallière, that's unfair!"

"Louise, what are you going to do about the saintess' duty?
Louise!"

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

Just as everyone, dumbfounded, watched them attentively...

Their bodies simply disappeared into the beyond of the gate.